

THE
PAPERS

READ BEFORE THE

American Institute of Instruction,

AT

PORTSMOUTH, N. H., AUGUST, 1869.

WITH THE

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS,

INCLUDING

A List of Officers.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

FORTIETH ANNUAL MEETING.

FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

PORTSMOUTH, N. H., Aug. 3, 1869.

THE first session of the Fortieth Annual Meeting of the American Institute of Instruction, commenced in Congress Hall, Portsmouth, at half-past two o'clock, P. M. The Chair was occupied by the President, John Kneeland, of Boston. Prayer was offered by Rev. L. L. Harmon, of Portsmouth.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

Lyman D. Spaulding, Esq., Chairman of the School Committee of Portsmouth, extended a cordial welcome to the Institute, on behalf of the school board and teachers of the city. He referred to the great work of common school education, as that which has accomplished all that now distinguishes this country for its high degree of civilization, and expressed the confident hope that the results of this meeting would increase an interest in that subject in the city of Portsmouth.

Rev. H. L. Kelsey also welcomed the Institute heartily, in the name of the citizens of Portsmouth. He said: I am simply an usher, standing at the door of the Institute, to endeavor, if possible, to make you feel at home among us. We are not all teachers, but we are all learners; and we have all been looking forward with deep interest to

your coming among us, expecting to be profited thereby even far beyond the hospitalities which may be tendered to you by the citizens of our city. Those of us who have been teachers can sympathize with you in your labors in all the departments of instruction. No one who has not been a teacher can fully sympathize with teachers in all the peculiarities of their work.

Mr. Kelsey expressed the hope that the Institute would not hesitate to discuss freely any topic that came before it. This free and full discussion was needed in the city of Portsmouth; as the public mind of the city was not aroused as it should be to the interests of education. The convictions and sentiments of the people, with reference to what education is, are not what they ought to be. I hope you will speak freely the thoughts you may have to utter; if you have any criticisms to make, let them be frankly uttered. If they hit any of our teachers, or if they cross the prejudices of any of the citizens of this old, conservative town, let them come. Receive, then, our hearty welcome, one and all.

RESPONSE BY THE PRESIDENT.

Gentlemen:—Your words of welcome are very grateful. Our Institute, during the forty years of its existence, has met in several different cities and towns of New England. It has been held four times in your State; once at Manchester, once at Keene, and twice at Concord. This is our fifth visit to your State, and the first to the city of Portsmouth. Your kind words of welcome make us hope it will not be the last. In looking over some of the earlier records of your town, I find that at an early date an act was passed "That care be taken that an able school-master be provided for the town, as the law directs, not

vicious in conversation." We have brought you to-day very many school-masters and school-mistresses, some of them very able, and I trust you will find us all "not vicious in conversation."

Permit me to thank you for your kind welcome, and to invite you and the citizens of Portsmouth to take part with us in our discussions.

ADDRESS TO THE INSTITUTE BY THE PRESIDENT.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Institute: — It is my privilege to welcome you to the work laid out for us. We do not mean that this FORTIETH ANNUAL MEETING of the Institute shall be behind any of its predecessors in the importance of the topics discussed, or the earnestness and ability brought to their consideration.

When this Institute was first organized, there was great need of rousing the people to the consideration of educational interests. It is true that all our New England territory was then dotted with school-houses; but what structures they were! The administration of affairs in the school-houses was probably not very much better than the buildings themselves. The meagre provision made for the support of the schools was a fair index of the interest of the community in the great object of education. But that state of things has passed away. I suppose it would not now be difficult to find in every county in New England some one building whose worth is more than the cost of all the school property of the county at the time this Institute was organized. In very many of our towns and cities, some one teacher now receives a salary greater than all the appropriations for school purposes then. These commodious structures, this liberal provision for our wants, tell of a different state of things.

Now, I do not mean to claim that this has all been owing to the American Institute of Instruction. Other agencies have been at work, other associations have been formed, able men in all parts of the country have entered into the field, and somehow, in the good providence of God, this has been brought about.

But this Institute may take to itself a little credit. Yesterday, in the office of the Superintendent of Schools at Boston, I saw a little document whose existence I had not known before. It was a memorial from a committee chosen by this Institute, to the General Court of Massachusetts, praying for the appointment of a superintendent of common schools. That was presented in 1836, and was signed by George B. Emerson, S. R. Hall, and E. A. Andrews, men well known to educational fame. What followed? Very soon a Secretary of the Board of Education was appointed for Massachusetts. Similar officers were from time to time appointed in other States. Then came county and town superintendents; so that now, when you take up this circular of the National Teachers' Association, giving the order of the meetings to be held at Trenton, a fortnight from this week, you find among other meetings one of superintendents of schools. You could not have called a meeting of that kind forty years ago. When I saw that little document, I thought I saw in it the seed from which has come this wondrous growth. You find also in this same circular a call for a meeting of Normal School principals. The steps taken by this Institute led to the organization of the first Normal School in Massachusetts. So many Normal Schools have now been established by the various States, that there will be a large gathering of Normal School principals at Trenton. The American Institute of Instruction has

done good work; but now it is only one of many agencies. There are other associations covering broader fields of action; but, we trust, none more faithful and earnest. We must remember our past, but not rest on our laurels. We must endeavor to do what present exigencies demand. It is not so much to rouse the people, as to organize and perfect a great system of public instruction. That is the work before us; and it is a work to which we may well address ourselves.

There is another word which should be said, and that to the ladies. The Institute has heretofore consisted of only gentlemen. But now the constitution has been altered so that ladies can become members. We have always welcomed the ladies. We had an article in the Constitution inviting ladies to be present to hear our lectures and listen to our discussions, and we have been glad to see them. But now we not only welcome them, but we invite them to become a part of the Institute, to join with us, and take their share of the labors and responsibilities. (Applause.)

There is a fact in the educational history of Portsmouth which makes it peculiarly appropriate, ladies, that you should here receive your first public invitation to become members of the American Institute of Instruction. It would seem that the beginning of this system of public instruction, now so firmly established in this town, originated in the generosity of a woman. A woman "for good and divers reasons, out of the love which she bore this town," presented to it a lot of land, upon which they must erect a school-house. In the year 1700, the town owned no school-house, though there were schools which the people patronized. So this good woman endeavored to spur up the town to build a school-house by giving the lot.

Surely the town of Portsmouth owes much to this woman; and therefore I feel that not only in the name of the American Institute, but in that of Bridget Gaffert, I can invite you to come up and join our organization, and help carry on that great work which she had so much at heart. (Applause.)

Appointments of Committees were then made as follows:—

Committee on Nomination:—A. P. Stone, of Portland, Me.; Geo. A. Walton, of Westfield, Mass.; T. W. Bicknell, of Providence, R. I.; D. B. Hagar, of Salem, Mass.; T. W. Valentine, of Brooklyn, N. Y.; A. M. Payson, of Portsmouth, N. H.; David N. Camp, of New Haven, Conn.

Committee on Teachers and Teachers' Places:—James W. Webster, of Boston; A. S. Higgins, of Brooklyn, N. Y.; B. F. Dame, of Portsmouth, N. H.

Committee on Resolutions:—D. B. Hagar, of Salem, Mass.; Josephine Ellery, of Gloucester, Mass.; Miss Perkins, of Bath, Me.

DISCUSSION.

THE SUPERVISION AND INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS.

J. P. Averill, Esq., Superintendent of Schools, Northampton, Mass., was first called upon to open the discussion upon this question. He said he had been studying this subject for the past two years, in connection with his duties as superintendent of schools; and as he had examined it, the magnitude of it increased, and he had begun to think he really knew less about it than when he commenced to study it. As is the case with most active, energetic teachers, the longer they teach, the more they feel their own lack of fitness for the work; so he had less confidence in his knowledge of this subject, the more he had considered it.

We sometimes speak of our system of education, and sometimes of our system of supervision. It seems to me that that is a misnomer. If you were travelling in Germany to-day, and a German educator should ask you what is the system of education in New Hampshire or in Massachusetts, what would you answer him? where would you begin? Take the good Old Bay State, for instance; what is her system of education? We, to be sure, have a Board of Education, and a Secretary of the Board, and we have an Agent. Each town is required by the State to do certain things. But there is no penalty attached if those things are not done, in most cases. In regard to the subject of supplying text-books, the law of the State requires every town to provide some place where books shall be supplied at or near the cost; but no

penalty is attached to the neglect. It may be one town in fifty makes the arrangement.

Take the subject of supervision, and what is it? It may be one thing in Boston, and another in Charlestown. It is one thing in one place, and another thing in another; so that the system of supervision seems to be a mere shadow. If we would have a system, we must go back and take the first step by legislation to produce it. I do not know that it is contemplated as a desirable thing that there should be any system. At present the modes of supervision are as various as the places themselves. The words of the topic for discussion seem to indicate a looking over and a looking into the schools. The looking over the schools is a great work. It divides itself first into a supplying of all the material for the school-room. It is the duty of the supervisor, sitting quietly in his office, to look over the schools and see that all are supplied with the implements for the prosecution of the work. This, I apprehend, is very much neglected. And it is for you, members of this Institute and others, to see that just here is the duty of the supervisor of the school, to supply you with the materials. And if he does not do it, do as another teacher did. She said when she found the school committee had made no provision for supplying them, "I will supply them myself, and trust to the generosity of the people to pay me." Do you suppose she had to pay for them? She did supply them, and the pay was readily made for them.

In the thorough and proper supervision of a school, there is a great deal of hard work among three parties, — teachers, parents, and children. I think the great difficulty will be found with parents. To bring up a community to the importance of sustaining the teacher, and

in supplying all the facilities to enable him to prosecute the work successfully, is a very important duty.

Let us look a moment at the word "inspect"; I like that word "in." It seems to me that the duty of an inspector is to step in to the school-room; and usually to step out again pretty quick, especially if inspecting the work of a good teacher. For I am more and more convinced that the ability to select and appoint the right teacher for the right place is of much more importance than the duty of inspecting that teacher after she is appointed. I think an inspector should have no stated time to visit the school, but should step in, look in occasionally, and pop out, leaving the teacher untrammelled in whom he has confidence. And the teacher in whom he has not confidence should be made to give place to one in whom he has.

A. P. Stone, Esq., Principal of the High School of Portland, Me., said, after an appropriate anecdote introducing his remarks, that the supervision and inspection of schools have not come down where teachers feel them. The matter in large cities has been brought into some system, and schools are receiving the benefits of it. But so far as even county and State supervision is concerned, the towns really get very little benefit from it.

I would like, said Mr. S., to have a dozen State or city superintendents get together and compare notes as to what is supervision. Mr. Averill has given us his idea; whether we should all agree, I do not know. Probably if ten or twenty persons were to specify the particulars of the work of the supervisor or inspector, no two would agree. I am of the opinion that in many places in New England our common-school system has been carried about as far as it can be, and bear good fruit, until the

system of supervision and inspection has been improved. It seems to me that the system needs an engineer to develop the capacities of the machinery, and that our schools can be greatly improved by more efficient supervision. We all know and feel that the great need in New England to-day is that our schools have more and better supervision and inspection.

Rev. Daniel Leach, Superintendent of schools in Providence, R. I., was next called upon. He said he regarded the subject of supervision as of the highest importance; that it is impossible to elevate our schools to the highest standard without thorough, careful supervision. In the first place, there must be a standard, without which one cannot determine whether he is approaching what is desirable. There should be kept before teachers a high, an elevated standard, to which they should constantly aim. It is one of the most important duties of a superintendent to keep that standard constantly before teachers, that they may compare their work with it; and one of his principal duties is to compare the daily work of the teachers with the standard, and point out wherein they are conforming to it, or approaching it, and wherein they are not.

The importance of this work was enforced by one or two illustrations drawn from his own experience as a superintendent, showing the necessity for a teacher's having a clear and distinct apprehension of the work to be done first, and then of the work to follow in the natural order. Most teachers have to learn the structure of the minds of their various pupils, and their various tastes, by experience; and they often enter upon their work without having anything to aim at; first, in regard to discipline; or next, in regard to the branches to be

taught. They have no specific aim, so as to bring all forces to bear in order to produce a movement in the right direction. But the forces are scattered, a little being applied in one direction, and a little in another. Thus it will be found that the forces of the teacher and of the pupil are wasted to a great degree, for the want of a thorough concentration of effort in the right direction.

It is important to interest parents in this work, to see that they co-operate with teachers. For, if the right teaching of the young is the greatest work, and one that is to interest all, and one that is to have a more important influence on the social state of man, in elevating and improving him, than any other work that can be done, then all should unite all the powers that can be brought to bear upon it, and there should be a perfect union of effort in carrying forward the glorious work. The indifference of parents in regard to this work is the great evil existing throughout New England at the present time. Wherever parents have determined to have a good school, they have always succeeded. The motive is in the people, without which nothing can be done to elevate the schools to the highest standards. Illustrations of the success of united effort on the part of the people were given to enforce the necessity of such effort. Whenever a superintendent can secure the co-operation of parents, he will create a power which will elevate the schools more than anything else. The best teachers, without this, will not succeed; the most perfect buildings and the most attractive embellishments in and around the schools, will not secure success so long as there is cold indifference at home. While that exists, no power on earth can make good schools.

Prof. S. S. Greene, of Brown University, referred to

the elevation of the tone and character of schools in many of the cities of the country, as the fruit of intelligent supervision. The first city superintendent ever appointed in this country, was the Hon. Nathan Bishop, at Providence, R. I. The city of Providence, taking an intelligent view of the manner in which education should be conducted, at an early day, in the organization of the city, established an office of superintendent by charter, so that it should be a permanent office. The Superintendent entered upon his duties in 1839; and the results in that city have been well known in all parts of the country. That city has had a longer experience than any other of the benefits of such supervision; and there is not the slightest tendency to a change.

All who are acquainted with the city of Oswego, in New York, know very well it was once a busy place, never noted for its public instruction or for any special excellence in its public schools, until the appointment of a superintendent, which was recently. Mr. Sheldon entered upon its duties a few years ago, in earnest; and it is due to him to say that he has changed the tone of feeling completely in that city, in respect to public education. He has given a character to the schools of that city. To be sure, he has had the co-operation of the intelligent men of the city, but he has had opposition which has sprung up from time to time. There have been grounds for criticism, for he has been experimenting in his work; but he has been a live man, ready to change when it was shown that he was wrong. But he has been incessant in introducing what has been called the object system; but he has changed his own views in reference to the character of that teaching; and there are now to be found in that city some of the best schools,

and some of the best methods of education, to be found anywhere in the world.

In the first place, the superintendent, by his position, is placed over all the schools, and he is the only person in the city who can know the condition of the schools, and understand them fully. No committee can do this; one man, with his standard of excellence, will report one of the poorest schools in excellent condition; another man, with his standard, will report a good school in an unsatisfactory condition. No man but the one who has seen them all can report them fairly and properly to the citizens.

Now, what is his business? It is to inform himself in relation to systems and schools and in respect to school literature, methods of discipline and methods of teaching, methods of carrying forward schools everywhere; to visit other cities, and see how schools are managed in other places. A superintendent cannot visit the schools in the city of New York, or Oswego, or Providence, or Boston, and examine the working of any one system of schools, without being able to carry back to his own city something new, and some new way of working his own system. His business then is to introduce it. If he goes to an educational meeting, and comes in contact with superintendents, and compares notes, finding how one man is carrying forward a certain work, and how another man is meeting a particular difficulty, and how one man has created a good public sentiment, — he goes home to awaken the citizens to the importance of education, and to the adoption of the best measures to conduct it successfully. He finds one city with schools better graded, or the school-rooms better made, and every new house afterwards built in his city will follow the best

model. No change that has taken place in regard to schools is to be compared with that in regard to school architecture. Look at the houses in the West and Middle States, and you find all those lately built are palaces. Even small towns devote \$25,000 to the building of a school-house. Men will put their money into brick and mortar to construct enormous mills, and they have done it heretofore in many cases while they neglected their children; but they are willing, when made to understand that it is best, to put money into school-houses. It is done in some places, and in others it is not. Why not? Because there is no supervision. It is time that the people in all parts of the country should be aroused to the subject. Every one who will look into the matter will see how there must be a unison among schools. Twenty-five years ago, the old red school-house was as good as was required by the time and circumstances; but now you cannot have the best schools in such houses. Good teaching implies good teachers; and that implies that they must be found; and the business of the superintendent is to find them and put them into good school-houses. We can go to Salem and find such teachers, and in other normal schools; and when we put these good teachers into good school-houses, there is harmony and perfect unity in the work, and we see children going up from one grade to another continually, as they should. Supervision is wanted for all this, intelligent supervision. We want an eye looking over all the parts of the work. We want a man, too, whose eyes are open, and who knows what are the external and internal wants of the school, who understands the best systems; and we cannot have such men, unless we have men whose whole time is given to the work.

Supervision! What is it? You could not name it in all its parts in an hour; you could not mention them all if you should talk about it till sunset. But you will never have good schools in Portsmouth or anywhere else, until you have that kind of supervision which secures the appointments required for a good school. That we shall have here some time, and at the South, and then this country will be filled with good schools, because there will be good supervision. (Applause.)

Professor C. O. Thompson, of the Worcester Technical School, said: So long as the people of New England consent to make the primary schools the training schools for teachers, and neglect to have teachers trained for the education of their children, so long will supervision be neutralized. Supervision has accomplished much; but the waves of progress so far have dashed against the rocks of prejudice and ignorance in the community generally. Consider the State of Massachusetts! — and I think the remarks of Mr. Averill were very pertinent — we have no system; are in a condition little short of ridiculous; for we pay nearly \$30,000 a year to educate teachers in our normal schools, and there is the end. A four-pence-half-penny committee man in a little country town, will not consent to sacrifice his dignity by appointing one of those accomplished lady teachers who has a diploma from a State normal school, without putting her through an examination. Next to an efficient and intelligent supervision, we need more professional enthusiasm on the part of teachers; and as a direct corollary and necessary consequent, more profound respect on the part of the people at large for the profession of teaching.

I have a little chapter of experience to relate in regard

to this matter. We ventured some time since in Boston, after fully considering the importance of the step, to prepare a bill to be presented to the Committee on Education, making it possible, and in a certain sense obligatory, to appoint a teacher who held a diploma of a normal school, taking that as a sufficient evidence of competency to teach. We argued the matter before the committee, as well as we could; and the committee, with some trepidation, presented it to the House. The fate of that bill revealed; as a bright flash of lightning at midnight reveals objects, the utter ignorance of the people at large on the subject. For one legislator, of no prominence at all, and of extremely mean English, ventured to remark or suggest whether, if this bill were passed, it would not give graduates of the normal schools a certain advantage over others. But that killed the bill, and the effort has not been renewed since. But it certainly will be; and that, it seems to me, is one of the first things to be done. The influence of the Board of Education is not felt as it should be in Massachusetts. The Secretary of the Board holds institutes, which are extremely valuable; every town is aided which he blesses with his presence. But this is not the thing; nobody is responsible to him or anybody else. The thing to be done is for the legislature to pass a bill of that kind, and then for the Board of Education to see that certificates are not granted to people who are not competent to hold them.

D. B. Hagar, Esq., principal of the Salem Normal School, said: This subject makes me feel almost old; for it reminds me that just eighteen years ago it was my business to present this same subject at Keene in this State. And perhaps it may be as well to hear some one read from the reports, what was then said.

At that time there was but one superintendent in Massachusetts—in Boston. Up to that time every place supervised its schools by means of town committees. At the present time every city in Massachusetts has a superintendent; and a large number of the towns also are supervising their schools in the same way. I am satisfied that the movement is towards town or individual superintendence; and I think that towns employing superintendents will make rapid progress in all their educational interests.

We hear much said about our glorious system of free schools; we hear clergymen and politicians exalting the vocation of the teacher, and talking about our system of free schools. In my opinion, most of that talk is buncombe. When we really value a thing, we show it by our acts. If we engage in any great enterprise, we show our interest in it by the manner in which we undertake to manage it. No man would undertake to carry on any large pecuniary interest, having many branches, without some one to supervise it, and see that those employed were doing their work in the most efficient manner. But in this matter we say by our action that anybody is competent to manage schools. Examine the committees, and what kind of men do you find? Respectable men no doubt, generally, and often educated men; but how many are acquainted with the business of education? The village doctor, the storekeeper, and the lawyer, if there is one, constitute the committee; and quite likely not one of them has given any special attention to the subject of education. Why is this? Simply because the people think teaching is a simple business, something that any one can do, and without any supervision. A clergyman spoke the truth, as it is held by

many, in regard to myself. "He is teaching, but after all, it is a very small business." How comes it to pass that it is small? Simply because it is not comprehended. Is it a thing of chance, a thing adopted by any one at hap-hazard, not based on the laws of mind? No, the truth is that mental philosophy itself is a profound study; and as any system of education is based on mental philosophy, that system of education is a profound thing; and nobody is competent to do the best possible work in the school-room, even in the primary school, unless he is well acquainted with the laws of mind. I hold that we teachers ought by our own studies and by our own presentation of educational matters to give the public to understand that we think the subject of education a great one, and that it requires something more than mere knowledge and tact in dealing with boys and girls; that beyond that there is a deep and profound knowledge of the laws of mind, and of the methods of bringing out the action of the mind. When we can bring the people to understand that this is a great work, they will understand that, as every other great work needs supervision, so this also needs it.

But it is sometimes said that Rev. Mr. A. and Dr. B. are educated men; why cannot they supervise? Because they do not understand the subject thoroughly; they never have made the subject a special study. I hold that the work of education is so great a work that it demands something more than the refuse time of men who are employed in other business. Suppose I am a minister. I say to myself I have a sermon written, I guess I will run in and look after the schools. So in I go, and with very profound wisdom undertake to give direction, to a man who has made education his business and study

for a long time. The doctor says, I have attended to this patient, and I have buried that one; and I guess I will go in and look at the school for a short time. This demonstrates that people generally do not understand that the work of education is a work that needs a thorough study of principles and of ways and means. As a matter of justice to our teachers, to say nothing about other matters, the supervisors of our schools, and their teachers, ought to be men thoroughly, practically acquainted with the business that they undertake to supervise. How is my work as a teacher to be estimated by a teacher who does not know my work? How is he to know me and understand my motives? How does he know the principles that underlie my methods? Probably he does not know them, unless he has had this practical experience.

Again, we have some men, who have had some experience, have read Herbert Spencer and Sir William Hamilton, and that is all. But our schools should be supervised by those who know the work from top to bottom, — men who, when they step into a school, can see what is wrong; and, more than that, can see what is right. No man can do that, unless he has made the business of education the study of his life. Many will think a certain theory is right, when a practical teacher will tell them it is not, and cannot be carried out in practice. I think our discussions ought to tend to a practical purpose, and I think every city and large town should have its superintendent; and the small towns should combine and employ a thoroughly competent person. It is the most economical way to supervise them. What we want is to accomplish all we can with the least possible amount of time, money, and labor. All that makes the difference

between failure and success with many a young teacher, is the wise counsel of some one who understands the matter.

If we were all to stop and look at the responsibility of our positions and labor, I venture to say we should all shrink from the work. In all cases the persons employed to supervise schools should be men experienced in teaching, men who have made teaching a study and a practice, in order to secure justice to the teachers, and to accomplish most for the schools. We receive advice from those in whom we have confidence. No teacher is so wise that he may not learn something from others; and these suggestions that may be given by an experienced supervisor, one who has been a teacher, would be received, when they would not be received from others.

I think we should have not only our town and city superintendents, but county superintendents, or something equivalent. Unity in the work can be produced in the work of the different schools throughout the city or town; and in the same manner county supervision may result in the same way, in carrying from town to town the advantages which each has. I think Institutes cannot do any better work than to endeavor to establish these two principles: first, that our schools are of such value that they demand thorough, wise supervision; second, that in order to obtain this supervision we must employ men who have made the practical work of education a study and an art. (Applause.)

Mr. Stetson, of Maine, recently appointed County Supervisor for Androscoggin County, next spoke, giving a full exposition of the work which he was attempting to carry out in his county. He said that each of the sixteen counties of the State now has a supervisor; and

after enumerating some of the evils that have existed heretofore in connection with the work of education in that State, he expressed the confident expectation, that the result of the recent appointment of supervisors would be most satisfactory and profitable.

Mr. H. H. Kimball, of Boston, thought the old adage should be observed, that the Institute ought not to refuse to "give the devil his due"; and he proceeded to defend the system of supervision by committees chosen from the people of the town, declaring that they ought to have their due.

Mr. Stone, of Portland, humorously suggested that there was nothing due them. (Applause and laughter.)

Mr. Kimball resumed, saying he had known them to do some good. Teachers may be inclined to look at the work from a one-sided view. He believed it better to have lawyers, and doctors, and business men, on the committee as supervisors of public schools. He would rather have his own work, as a teacher, examined by several committee men, than by any one man.

Professor D. N. Camp, of Connecticut, thought the Institute should adopt some resolutions, expressing the sense of the members present, in regard to the points presented in the discussion. He continued, alluding to the suggestion that only practical teachers should be supervisors; and stated that one of our largest States has recently provided by legislative enactment that no person can be a superintendent of city or county schools, unless he holds a certificate of the highest grade as a teacher. The consequence is, that teaching means something there. Everything that can be done to lead the community to think that teaching is something besides mere routine work, will be a benefit.

There may be differences of opinion as to the business of a superintendent or inspector; but he would recommend the idea in the English system of judging by the results produced; as they withhold grants to schools, that, having received them, do not show good results. The work of supervision and inspection there has reference to ascertaining results.

The suggestion of Mr. Camp, in regard to resolutions, was adopted, and he was appointed as the committee to prepare them. At a subsequent session, the resolutions were reported by him, and after a brief discussion, unanimously adopted. They are as follows: —

Resolved, That the judicious and thorough supervision of our public schools conduces to their efficiency, and promotes the highest welfare of society.

Resolved, That school supervision should include the arrangement of school buildings, the appointment of teachers, the classification of pupils, the order of studies and method of teaching, examination of results, and all other matters which pertain directly to the interests of public schools.

Resolved, That in order to secure faithful supervision and inspection, it is of vital importance that there should be in every state, city or town, where practicable, a superintendent eminently qualified by education, vocation and sympathy, to perform the duties of the office, and that his whole time, or so much as is required, should be devoted to such supervision and inspection, with full authority to execute the orders of school boards and represent the sentiment of the people.

Resolved, That the adaptation of county supervision as related to state and town school organizations, and its

success in every State where it has been efficiently administered, commend it to the consideration of all friends of public schools.

[Adjourned.]

EVENING SESSION.

The Institute met at 8 o'clock, in the North Congregational Church, and was addressed by Hon. Joseph White, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, on "*Our Common School System.*" At the close of the address, the Institute adjourned to 9 o'clock, Wednesday morning.

SECOND DAY.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, AUG. 4.

DISCUSSION.

The topic for discussion this morning was "Secondary Education."

Mr. Elbridge Smith, of Dorchester, having been designated to open the discussion, read the following paper:—

The term Secondary as used in education is often liable to an erroneous or ambiguous construction. As used in New England, and I think in the United States generally, it is most frequently applied to one of the lower grades of instruction. In its proper acceptance, however, it applies to one of the three great departments into which the entire work of education is divided. In European writers (on the subject of education), and in the best authorities in our own country, the whole work of education is included under the three main divisions of Pri-

mary, Secondary, and Superior or Higher. By the term Secondary, therefore, we are to understand what is more commonly denoted with us by High School or Academic instruction. It is that part of education above the Grammar School and below the college or university. With this limitation of the meaning of the term it will be seen at once that the subject of our deliberations for the hour comprises, I might almost say, the entire battle-ground of our profession. In primary or elementary education there may be differences of opinion in regard to the methods, but there can be but little respecting the subjects of instruction. So in the superior and professional education the questions arising are those of degree rather than of kind. The true university (and it is becoming more and more true of the college) receives its pupils not to dictate to them the studies which they are to pursue, but simply to supply their demands. Travelers upon the highway can have no controversy respecting their journey so long as the road is strait and single; they may indeed differ respecting their mode of conveyance, there will be pedestrians and horsemen and passengers in all sorts of carriages, but their direction and destiny are the same. It is when they come to the fork or the cross roads that the tough questions arise, and the poor wayfarers sometimes feel like giving up in despair, rather than settling the claims of conflicting authorities. It is as it used to be on the high road from Worcester to Boston. The guide-boards were all clear and intelligible until we reached Watertown; there we read on two boards of the largest pretensions "shortest and best road to Boston." Both these shortest and best roads to Boston held out its peculiar advantages, and the stranger was as much bewildered as Bunyan's pilgrim ;

the one proposed to take the traveller through the classic schools of Cambridge, and show him all the wonders of West Boston bridge, while the other claimed to take him by a mathematical line over that miracle of engineering, the mill-dam, and by that marvel of mechanical skill, the city grist mill.

Just so it is in the work of education when we reach the secondary stage; we then come to the guide-boards, and the poor pilgrims fall into all sorts of debates and controversies. There is the wicket gate constructed on strictest principles of Geometry and Algebra, with Euclid and Archimedes as porters; and hard by is the classic hill Difficulty beset with Attic reduplications and Æolic digammas, oxytones and paroxytones, perispomena and properispomena, while the thickets resound with Homeric rhapsodies, bucolic idyls, Sophoclean choruses, Anacreontic songs, Demosthenean and Ciceronian eloquence. In this strange Babel of authorities and chaos of guides, all alike point to the distant Delectable Mountains and the Celestial City, while each claims to lead its followers safe from the dangers of Apollyon through no valley of humiliation or shadow of death; and each in turn charges upon the other the responsibility of all the skeletons that are bleaching on the distant road-sides.

Nor is this all. Some claim that no female pilgrim should dare these dangerous paths to tread, and others claim that there is no danger if they only go without male attendants. Others again stoutly maintain that Christiana and Great-Heart were of mutual advantage to each other.

Perhaps I cannot better illustrate the character and variety of the questions that arise in this stage of education, than by a reference to particular cases. Take the

city of Boston; there are no less than five varieties of secondary schools, and each expressive in its organization, or methods of instruction, of different views and theories. There is the Latin School, the lineal descendant of the old English grammar school as we now see it at Winchester, Eton, and Rugby; there is the English High School, to represent the real schools of the old world; while the Girls' High and Normal carries back our mind to the days when monasteries and nunneries were deemed necessary to put asunder by impossible barriers what God has joined by the purest and holiest sanctions; and these sanctions are again recognized in another of its secondary schools, the Roxbury High; while the Roxbury Grammar School, upon an independent foundation and with a government of its own, carries us back again to the old English foundations which we have just mentioned. To these five types will soon be added a sixth, which has an entirely distinct lineage, and which offers to male and female alike the advantages of language, literature, and science.

To these six classes may be referred, I think, all the secondary schools of the country, unless we make a distinct class of the purely private institutions which cover the same or similar ground. In considering these schools we become painfully conscious of the numerous questions, as yet unsettled, connected with them. There is first the old *quaestio vexata* of the classics *vs.* the modern languages, and the various forms of pure and applied science. In the second place, the questions of the co-education of the sexes, and the adaptation of various forms of culture to the male and female mind. At this point arise great moral and political, as well as educational questions: questions involving not merely the welfare of

schools, but of society in its aggregate forms,—questions now claiming and receiving discussion as great matters of State policy. If woman is to be armed with the ballot, and perhaps even with the bullet, it can no longer be doubtful whether she shall share equally all the honors and all the privileges that science, art, or literature can give. If woman is to start on Saturday of this very week as one of the observers and interpreters of the grandest phenomena of nature, can there longer be question whether she shall, if she choose so to do, study the language in which Sappho sung and which Plato wrote, decipher the characters on the Rosetta stone, the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, or penetrate with Newton and La Place the most abstruse laws of exact science, and apply them to the most subtle phenomena of the material world? And here, too, in the secondary stage of education, arises the great question which neither Englishmen nor Americans have duly considered,—shall the English language, inspired with the genius of Bacon, Milton, and Burke, be recognized as worthy of a place beside that in which Homer sung, or that in which Cicero spoke?

I have spoken of secondary education as comprised between the grammar school and the college. At first this may seem a well-defined limitation; but in reality the line of demarkation between the secondary school and the college is very irregular; it is like the magnetic equator, presenting many sharp angles and deep indentations. At one point we find the secondary school pushing its training and culture far into the college curriculum, and at another the college coming down an equal distance to do the proper work of the preparatory school. Hence arises a question in regard to the period of time which the course of study in the secondary school should

cover. In some cases it is three, in others four years, while in one case, at least, it is extended to six.

But suppose the question of time settled, — suppose the period of secondary education to be confined to three or four years, there still remain the conflicting claims of a multitude of studies. There are Latin and Greek, with the prestige of two or three thousand years to back up their claims; there are French, German, Spanish, and Italian, with their living representatives presenting treasures of literature, art, and science; there are the pure mathematics, with a whole troop of *-osophies* and *-ologies* following in their train. Nor can we leave out of the account what are sometimes called the *finishing* studies, such as drawing and music.

This rambling survey of the field shows us how much is to be done in the work of secondary education in America. As a consequence of these conflicting questions of time, subjects, objects, and methods, we find a corresponding variety in the internal administration of schools whose external organization is nearly the same.

In Massachusetts some of these questions may be regarded as virtually settled; as, for example, the co-education of the sexes; out of more than one hundred and sixty secondary or high schools, probably not a dozen are now conducted upon the separate plan. This question has virtually settled itself. What God has joined together, man has been able, to but a limited extent, to put asunder. The great moral and intellectual advantages of bringing the sexes together have become so apparent that this form of organization is destined to become universal. It has been found that the very evils which are thought to result from co-education are increased a thousand fold by separation. So, also, the classical question is practically

solved by the freedom of choice allowed in the secondary schools where the sciences and modern languages are admitted on equal footing, and all are regarded as alike honorable and praiseworthy. In this respect the advantages of the prevailing type of secondary school in Massachusetts are very obvious. In numerous cases parents send their sons to the exclusively classical school with the fixed purpose of sending them to college. But the experience of a year or two convinces both parents and child that a mistake has been made in choosing the pathway of life, which, if persisted in, may prove fatal to the fondest hopes and aspirations. There is mortification in retreat, there is certain ruin in attempting to advance. And so we find boys of good abilities disheartened and half convinced that they are dunces, because they are unable to appreciate the beauties of unmingled Latin and Greek grammar in large doses. In the ordinary high school, on the contrary, if a year's taste of Latin convinces teacher, parent, and pupil that he is not destined to shine in college, nor even respectably to get there, the boy is gently switched off to an English course with little if any loss of time, and no feeling of defeat or mortification, and he graduates from the English course without a thought that he ever intended anything else. The co-education question and the classical question ought to be regarded as practically solved by the teachings of experience. It has been found that boys are not readily developed into old bachelors by separation from the other sex, and that girls, however scrupulously guarded, incline quite as much to matrimony as to the white or the black veil.

There is still another important department of this subject, and one which has, in this country, been almost

entirely overlooked. I mean the historical. The thorough knowledge of any science or art involves a knowledge of its history; and there is open to the man who shall have the taste and the ability to explore it, a most interesting field of inquiry. We have had a few valuable manuscripts on this subject in the histories of Dummer, Monson, and Groton academies, but a history of the endowed academies in the early part of this century as a whole, and their influence in awakening and stimulating the interest of the country, is still a great desideratum. Indeed, on the whole subject of educational history we seem to be not only negligent, but stupid. We do not seem to feel it to be of any importance to know on what foundations we are building. We manifest no anxiety to fix the great laws of human development in their chronological connection. We are, I fear, in education in about the same stage as the alchemists were in chemical science. We educate as if there had been no past, and as if there were to be no future. We make no inquiries of those into whose labors we have entered, respecting the work which they did, and leave the results of our toil, like sibylline leaves, the sport of the winds. This very day a score of men, who, commencing at Gettysburg, are surveying that field to fix beyond question the monuments in that conflict which decided the fate of America. But how many know, or care to know, the monuments attending the establishment of a great institution of learning?

It seems to me that this whole subject of secondary education ought to come before our educational meetings in some systematic form. In this hasty glance at it we see at once its extent and its importance. We see how much remains to be done to give to this important

stage of education the efficiency and power of which it is capable. It is not perhaps desirable that every secondary school should be precisely like every other. There should be opportunity here as elsewhere for variety of taste and talent in the teacher. We have not in education, any more than in agriculture, passed the stage of experiment. In prosecuting our work we have much to learn from the experience of England and the continent of Europe. We can derive from the old world both positive and negative instruction; and the present time is most favorable for our inquiries and investigations. The elaborate reports of Fraser, Arnold, Patterson, and Duruy, alone open to us a wide and most interesting field of study.

But, Mr. President, I will no longer trespass on your time. It was my purpose merely to bring the subject before the court, and I leave it to those better able to analyze and discuss it.

Rev. Charles Hammond followed, referring in his opening remarks to the great extent of the subject, and the difficulty of knowing where to commence. He continued: A general survey has been given by the gentleman who has introduced the subject, and we all felt, as he has swept over the ground, that almost every point in the discussion has been touched. I will allude to one point that strikes me as worthy of consideration, — the uncertainty of the terms used in our ordinary conversation and discussion on the subject. The very words have an uncertain signification. The highest schools are designated in language that does not have a definite limit. I was recently struck with a remark made by Prof. Sturtevant, at New Haven, that a great many questions as to the utility of this and that study if introduced into

this or that grade of school, would never be put, if there was a uniform use of the terms as applied to college, academy, university, etc. For this is the fact, in relation to the matter, — the language, the terminology, changes in its signification, so that the smaller the school, the greater the term used to designate it. Thus we have university and college at the West, meaning an academy of the very lowest pretensions and value, as compared with the standard at the East. At the East we have the term masters applied to the teachers of many schools; and it is a sufficient honor for the head teachers in England and on the Continent of Europe, to be called Masters. But when we get to New York or Illinois, we hear about a Chancellor of the University. And then the term College is coming back, and is applied to *Commercial Colleges* and all that sort of nonsense. (Laughter and applause.)

Once there was something giving dignity to the institution; but now we feel this difficulty when we approach this subject, to know what the terms mean. As compared with the English and Continental institutions, we have no such thing as a university on this continent, and never had; and the word "College," in the literature of the English language, is not properly used here.

If we study the history of education in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and throughout New England, we can approximate to some definite distinction between the three classes of schools named as primary, secondary, and college. To go back thirty years, it might be possible to indicate them in quantities that have some limit, some definiteness as to what is meant by a certain course of study. I think we want one word to designate the grades of schools which are to be maintained by public

taxation. The word "primary" does not meet that want, because the schools will vary according to the field and the obligations of the different localities. It is clear that a majority of the towns in New England cannot be supposed to meet the same obligations which the city of Boston can, or towns in the vicinity of Boston can, where it is possible to make gradations that shall answer almost all the needs of a liberal education, if one goes through the several grades. I think there is a limit to be set, at which the public obligation ceases. I do not believe it is the obligation of the State to give a college education to everybody in this land, no matter where he resides. It is not an obligation for one individual to lift a mountain; it is not an obligation of a town of fifteen hundred inhabitants to provide instruction that shall meet the want of one-tenth of one per cent, which is about the limit of those who ultimately reach college. It may be an obligation for the city of Boston to do that, because it can well afford it; it may be of this city and of Portland; but when we examine the actual number which the public benefit reaches, it may be doubted whether it is the obligation of any city to do that work, because the work should be done well, not simply be said to be done.

I was conversing with the superintendent of schools in the city of Concord, in this State, who told me they had a very fine high school in that city, that the senior class of that school, numbering some four or five, had reached such a state of progress in their studies as required more time to be given for their education than they could afford to give, and it was a question with him, whether it was not best to send those four or five boys down to Exeter, and allow them to complete their senior year of

education there, rather than be at the expense of appropriating the money which the great majority of scholars in that fine school needed, and who had no such idea as that of a full course of instruction. The same difficulty prevails everywhere. The truth is, the public mind has been inflated with unreal notions about what a complete education is. All these secondary schools are undertaking to do up the work. Schools are not high because they are called so, but according to the limit of attainment actually made. There must be a revolution in the public sentiment in regard to these matters, before we can properly grade these studies; and he will be the wise man who shall point out the limit. Then we shall not attempt to do everything, in every sort of school.

I think that eventually public functionaries will attempt what is practicable, and leave the particular preparation of secondary and superior instruction to those who understand its nature, uses, and relations. And I will venture to say that I do not believe it belongs to ordinary superintendence to do that work, or to mark out that instruction; but that the wisdom of ages can be brought to bear upon it; that those who have comprehended the length and breadth of education in its higher forms should be the persons to attend to it, and have the regulation of it. I think that secondary and superior education is put just where it was put by our fathers, in the hands of corporate bodies, and that it will stay there, and ought to be there, generally, — I will not say there are no exceptions, — but those who understand the best uses of education must be the ones to direct it. Such men as have directed Harvard and Yale and the two Phillips Academies will be the persons to mark out the courses of instruction that will fit men for stations in church and state.

There is a prejudice against these higher institutions, which has been started on the idea that you cannot build up one thing, without pulling down another. It has been thought best that there should be trustees of colleges as of public schools; that men should be put in to mark out courses of instruction, who know nothing about the Latin or Greek. I hold it as a principle that no man has a right to reason from what he does not know.

I think the gentleman who introduced this subject is mistaken in regard to the similarity of the Boston and the old Roxbury schools to the public schools of England; for, if I mistake not, the Boston Latin School is not a foundation school, as the great public schools in England are, but it is a type of multitudes of English schools.

Mr. Smith. I am aware that my remarks were open to the criticism which the gentleman has made; but if he will observe carefully my language, he will see that I thought of this when I wrote. I spoke of the Latin School as a "lineal descendant." It occurred to me it was not a foundation school, as the schools in England, to which I referred, are. But in its methods and course of study, I think it is a lineal descendant, inasmuch as it conforms strictly to the definition recognized in English law as one in which Latin and Greek are taught; and the Boston Latin School is one which has retained that type. I made a distinction between the internal management and the external organization. The Roxbury school is on a foundation, and one which will be sure within fifty years to give a larger support than any institution in New England.

But I decidedly take issue with the gentleman from Monson, in regard to the importance of having secondary and higher education given to close corporations. I

believe the great mischief we are now suffering, comes from that very cause; I believe it is because close corporations have had the management of these things that the questions in regard to the classics, and in regard to other important matters, have arisen. The guardians of Latin and Greek are responsible for the opprobrium that rests upon those studies. Every year of my life I am more and more persuaded of the value of Latin and Greek, and other cognate studies; I believe it is because they have been shut up in institutions, and not open to all, that this prejudice against them exists.

In regard to having them intrusted to close corporations, I think it is something to know what is going on in every college in New England; I read with care the matters connected with every commencement; and for many years this question has been most urgently pressed, that the alumni should have a voice in the matters of the college. You may say, these are educated men. Granted. They are men who are scattered broad-cast in every community; they are men who come in contact with all classes of men; not a few D. D.'s, or LL. D.'s, who live in what they call the still air of delightful study. Not the still air that John Milton spoke of, but the still air found in a musty lawyer's office or a minister's study, filled with cobwebs and ponderous tomes of scholastic theology. (Laughter and applause.)

I claim that this study of the classics, if left to itself in the secondary schools, will take care of itself. I believe there is power in the language that Demosthenes spoke, to take care of itself; it does not need the care of a D. D. or an LL. D. Freedom is what is wanted here, as well as elsewhere. Let those who want to study it, study it, and give them the best teachers that can be obtained. That is just what we need.

You may ask, do I mean to make the course of study in the secondary schools optional? No, let there be advice and discussion. I would not make them universities, and I would not force a boy to study Latin when it becomes entirely clear that God never intended he should study it.

My excellent friend must excuse me for one personal remark. He said men ought not to discuss that which they do not understand. I agree with him entirely; and while I have felt the breadth of his culture and the amount of his knowledge, I must say there is one point that he does not know. No man has honored himself more in secondary education than the excellent Principal of Monson Academy. I have had occasion, however, to admonish him that he has never felt the keen delight resulting from association with boys and girls, as they come fresh from their homes and from association with their fathers and mothers; and then all going home from school and coming again the next day. This natural, blessed constitution of society and school, for which Doctor Arnold sighed, but which we have here, and only need to perfect, is the kind which my friend does not know, as I think; and I think that it is in consequence of that ignorance that he makes this mistake.

Mr. Hammond. I do not intend to discuss the question of relative ignorance; but simply to say that we have no domiciles at Monson.

Mr. Smith. But you have boarders, do you not?

Mr. Hammond. Perhaps two-thirds; but they live in good, well-regulated families. (Laughter.)

Mr. Hammond continued: This talk about close corporations proves too much. It would prove it to be best to reform Harvard and Yale and Brown and every col-

lege in the land, and every well-regulated academy in New England of the higher grade, of long standing. I do not think my friend would be quite ready to reorganize Brown University, nor make it more popular in order to accomplish the purpose. The truth is, there is no set of men, in my judgment, more alive to the real wants of our higher and secondary institutions than those very men who are selected for the purpose of promoting the welfare of these institutions. We come right across one of these notions that have been circulated so industriously, but every one believes the falsity of, even in the argument of the gentleman, that our American colleges are cloisters in which Latin and Greek only are studied. That is the *vox populi*,—a *vox populi, non vox dei, sed vox diaboli*. (Laughter.)

Those who have traced the history of the secondary schools and higher schools of this country, know that there has been a progress in education from particular points,—an actual progress. And this matter has been most grossly misunderstood. The idea has been that the colleges have been to blame in being too cloister-like, and too much devoted to certain classes of study, to wit, Latin and Greek. In the last century it included all those studies called grammatical, not including English grammar; for English grammar was not then known in this country or in England. I presume there are persons still living who can remember when English grammar was introduced, although the number of grammars is now like the leaves of Vallambrosa. So late as 1800 no English grammar was taught as such; and it is true that the term "Grammar school" means a Latin school, because then no other kind of grammar was studied.

English Grammar was taught in the colleges in this country first ; and no man can refute what I say, as to the fact of our colleges being the almoners, not only of English, but of scientific education, and all the education that has come down to us. Any man may deny that, if he dare. I say that as to their uses there is no class of institutions in this land more popular and more deserving the support and prayers and love of the people than our colleges.

Mr. Smith. Will you allow me to ask a question?

Mr. Hammond. Yes, certainly.

Mr. Smith. Whence came the geological science of the Connecticut Valley?

Mr. Hammond. From James G. Percival. The best report made in this country came from him,—a cloister man, if ever there was one in this country, and the best linguist in New England.

Mr. Smith. You leave out of the account entirely, Edward Hitchcock?

Mr. Hammond. Edward Hitchcock is a first-rate man. (Laughter.)

Mr. Smith. Do you think James G. Percival has done as much to unfold the geology of the Connecticut Valley as Edward Hitchcock?

Mr. Hammond. Oh, no. But suppose we just stop this, and go on in a soliloquizing way. (Laughter and applause.) Anybody who takes the pains to look up this matter, will find that in American colleges, not one of them was copied after the English colleges any further than was necessary. There was no particular reason why they should be copied; for our fathers did not have any great sympathy with the educational powers abroad any more than with the political powers. The

people who came here could have no rights in the English schools, and they copied as models the English dissenting academies. If you want to know what they were, you will find that in the libraries. Such men as Doddridge and Watts had a thousand times more influence with the friends of Harvard and Yale than any of the English universities, or dignitaries in church or state; and our institutions were not classical, they did not deserve the name, while, all along, the English schools did. There were the most meagre attainments in all; but they did study all of science that could be got hold of. The president and professors were more interested in science than in literature. Even President Stiles took all the science he could; and certainly he was the most learned in the languages of any president of Yale except President Woolsey. The first president wrote a book of Natural Philosophy, which was a class-book in the college. President Clapp was a scientific man. When President Stiles came into office, he was the correspondent of Benjamin Franklin. President Hitchcock, of Amherst, was a pupil of Prof. Silliman, who began American Science under the patronage of Yale College, and to this day one-half, if not two-thirds, of all the course is scientific, rather than literary. There never has been the slightest prejudice against science there.

These colleges are not cloister-like; they learn so little Latin and Greek there, that people need not be disturbed about it. There is not a decent academy in Massachusetts or New Hampshire that does not teach as much Greek now as was required to graduate thirty years ago. Therefore, why talk about the colleges being cloisters? We have no cloisters here. We shall never have institutions copied after English models. We do

not need them ; they never have been, and never will be here.

Mr. Smith. If I said anything that implies that I regard the college as a musty cloister, I certainly said what I did not mean to say. I will go as far as any one in doing honor to the American College. But I do say that I think it is a great mistake to claim that a close corporation is the only body to manage an American College.

As to the question in regard to science in the colleges, I must say, I think the gentleman is mistaken. The exercises are worthy of great honor. No one honors James G. Percival more than I, and I think he was the first in American science. But the gentleman will agree with me that the first work on American science was published by a man of whom Yale College was afraid, and who is now represented in the person of his grandson, Sperry Hunt of Montreal, a man who has found his way without a college to the respect of the learned men of Europe.

We never do a greater injustice to an institution or an individual than when we claim for them what they would not claim for themselves. Colleges have always been ready to recognize this external talent. Edward Hitchcock was welcomed at Amherst, and although he never went through college, he always lamented it; and so do all the men who do so much for science, if they have not had a college training. The great Scotch geologist, who has left a name in the history of science, was not indebted to the colleges. But was he one to speak lightly of the advantages to be derived from them? Let not the college be envious of the man outside, who finds his way to

distinction; and let not the man outside complain of the men who are laboring in the same great work within.

A. P. Stone, Esq., Principal of the Portland High School, thought there was a little exaggeration on the part of both the gentlemen who had just spoken, and that there was no occasion for them to run a tilt against each other. The difficulty of fitting boys for college, in our high schools, he thought was not so great as had been represented. My first labors, said he, were in an academy; and when I became a teacher of a high school I almost dreaded the undertaking of fitting boys for college, for fear the community would think I was giving them too much time. But from that day I have never found the difficulty the gentleman speaks of. The idea that you are to take the time at your command and divide it mathematically, giving each pupil his proportion, is absurd. The gentleman does not do it. I fitted twelve boys for college this year, and I had them all in one class. I found no difficulty in dividing them, part being at the same time studying surveying, and part Latin and Greek. The community do not find fault because five young ladies study botany, and thirty want to study arithmetic. I know a school where one single young man wants to fit for college. He recites in other classes. Possibly you may have to devote an hour to his lesson in Greek; but is not there a young lady who wants to study botany? You are to consider all the circumstances. May be it would be cheaper for the city of Concord to send half a dozen boys to Exeter to fit them for college; but I doubt very much the expediency of it. I protest against narrowing the question down to mere dollars and cents; I have no patience with those who ask "how many scholars are you fitting for college?"

Half a dozen. Well, it must be it costs the city forty dollars each." I protest against that. You may keep them out of school; but the reform school or the schoolship may tax you and the city, if you do so. The city councils and the town meetings settle these questions, when they appropriate money for the public schools. There is no question as to the minimum of schooling to be given to children; and each community must decide for itself the maximum. But I say that if any town or city votes to open a school for the study of Hebrew, or a law school, they have a right to do it, though I should not consider it expedient; but it seems to me that if we choose to bring the advantages of the college down to the common school, we have a right to do it. The very fact that few can afford to send to the academies and colleges is one reason that we should give those who choose the advantages they wish. I never found any of the difficulties the gentleman anticipates.

Mr. Hammond. I have not said a word against public schools, or against carrying any school just as far as you can persuade the people to carry it. I say, go as far as you can; it is money well laid out. If you can establish a college in Boston, let it be done.

Mr. Stone. I understood the gentleman to say it was not an obligation to do it.

Mr. Hammond. I say in general, it is not worth while to force the obligation on every municipal corporation.

Mr. Stone. The gentleman uses an unfortunate term. Nobody forces it upon them.

Mr. Hammond. No town can give the best possible education to every one belonging in it. There are as many bright minds born on the hills of New Hampshire as in the city of Boston, in proportion to the whole num-

ber, and the ability to do good is as much a natural endowment with them as any others, let them be born where they may. But I hold it is best to provide secondary schools of good character, and that they should be brought within the reach of all, so that he who is born on the hills shall have as good an opportunity as those who are born in the city.

Mr. Stone. I maintain that the boys born on the hills of New Hampshire or any other hills, shall have as good advantages as those born in Boston or Dorchester. Can you tell me the population of Nahant? I believe it has had the honor of appropriating the greatest amount of any place in the State, for each pupil; and the people do not grumble; there is no forcing about it, or anything of the kind. It is the unintentional exaggeration of that point that I rose to protest against. I think the amount of population is not to be considered at all.

Mr. Smith wanted to add a word. He related an anecdote of a good man in Providence who was greatly in the habit of saying amen, and expressing audibly his approbation of the preaching, as he heard it from time to time. This became annoying to others, and he was cautioned in regard to it, and checked his propensity in that direction. But on one occasion, when a preacher from abroad was occupying the pulpit, who touched his sympathies very much, he shouted, "A—men, hit or miss." I wish, said Mr. Smith, to add just that to the remarks of the gentleman from Portland; and give my humble testimony to the truth of what he uttered. I sent one boy to college this year. Had it cost the town five hundred dollars it would have been money well laid out. He gave to the school more than he took from it. How? By being an example of diligence and applica-

tion. It is worth more than can be expressed, to have a boy going on in that way. And he is drawing a whole dozen in his wake. Will any one say that he should have been taken out and sent to some other place to be educated?

Prof. C. O. Thompson. The fact is that a great many boys in New England are supposed to fit for college, who discover their mistake only when they present themselves for examination; and the result of our present system is, that only about one-third are properly fitted, so as to fairly start in the course of classical education. Now, for the sake of classical education, I mean to insist, with whatever influence I may have, on having the small towns confined to English education strictly; because under the present system boys fitted in small towns cannot be well fitted. I think we have spent time and money enough in that way, because it is so fruitless in results.

Mr. Stone. Is the gentleman prepared to give figures as to the number of boys poorly prepared, and whether they come from public high schools, or from classical institutions?

Mr. Thompson. My doctrine is, that the boys sent from the ordinary high schools are best fitted. Those who have taken the lead at Harvard have come from the Cambridge High School. Prof. Aiken of Princeton College, stated that the best prepared boys come from the public schools of Brooklyn. The best boys who go to Dartmouth go from Exeter or Andover. Wherever a town can fit boys for college and fit them well, then they ought to do it; but if they cannot, they should send them where they can be fitted.

Hon. Joseph White followed, saying there is a single

aspect of this question in which the community take a deep interest, and in regard to it he saw no necessary conflict between the high school and a well-endowed academy. But the poorly endowed academies are the weakest of all educational institutions in Massachusetts. Where they can employ as teachers distinguished scholars, such academies should be fostered and continued. The female academies in Massachusetts cannot be spared. They are the gems of the State.

LECTURE BY PROF. MORSE.

After a brief recess, the next matter brought to the attention of the Institute was that of "*Principles of Classification in Zoölogy*," by PROF. E. S. MORSE, of the Peabody Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

MUSIC IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS — METHODS OF TEACHING, Was the first topic presented this afternoon, by Mr. Luther W. Mason, Instructor of Music in the Boston Primary Schools. This was presented in the form of a lesson by Mr. Mason, to a class of about twenty boys and girls, from the public schools of the city, none of whom had received any previous instruction from Mr. Mason. They were from eight to twelve years of age, and the manner of presenting his method of teaching was exceedingly interesting to the audience, eliciting frequent expressions of approval.

DISCUSSION.

At the close of the lesson by Mr. Mason, a brief recess followed, when the subject of *Music in Schools* was taken up for discussion.

Prof. Greene said he wanted to speak not only of the general subject, but to commend the lesson given as a type of other lessons on other subjects. He thought the lesson by Mr. Mason was just what it should be; and that no teacher could fail to see from it that music should be taught in every school, whether in the city or country. Children can sing, and they ought to sing, and they should be taught to sing just in this way, being taught to read the music themselves. All lessons should be given in the same natural manner.

He said, I remember that when a boy, I went to a country school, and I was put to the task of committing to memory the letters of the alphabet, — the vowels and consonants. I think we had to learn that "a vowel is a sound which can be uttered by itself with the open position of the organs." What those *organs* were I did not know, for I had never seen a church organ; and as to the "*open position*," I did not know whether it pertained to myself or somebody else. (Laughter.) So that all I understood was that a vowel was something in the region of the unknown, and was to be determined by the open position of the organs.

A consonant was a "letter which has no sound except in connection with a vowel"; and that connection I did not know anything about, or whether it was in connection or not; and I confess the truth when I declare to you, that when I fitted for college, I did not know whether the letters had any particular sounds or not.

Now if Mr. Mason were teaching that, he would say: Will you listen to a sound? Yes. Then he would say *a*; and then the boys and the girls would repeat the sound. Now, do you want a little picture to represent that sound? Then he would make the letter and let

them try to make, and let them understand how the sound was uttered with the mouth open. Why could he not go through with the whole list of letters in the same way? This method, then, is a type for all elementary teaching.

Suppose we go a little further, and attempt to teach language in a similar manner? Not give to the pupils a grammar, and set them to the task of learning the definitions; but take an apple, a pin, or a book, and let them have something to see; and when they have seen it and had a simple lesson in language from it, they can recall it, and use it if necessary. And the whole range of school studies may be taught in the same manner.

Most teachers, in order to give an idea of the meaning of the word, would say to the pupil, look in the dictionary; but when Mr. Mason wanted the class to understand the meaning of the word *degree*, as applied in music, he took such a method that the children understood it as well as he. A teacher, in order to be very thorough, determined that his scholars should get the definitions of all the words in their reading lesson in the book. The children would, of course, select a set of synonyms. They took this passage:—

“‘No,’ said Columbus, in a burst of generous indignation,” and translated it thus,—

“‘No,’ said Columbus, in an explosion of munificent disgust.” (Laughter.)

The rest of their lesson was equally ludicrous.

We have improved much in object-teaching, and much is said against it. He who requires children to commit definitions, and relies on them for results, is sure to fail. I would rather have a teacher shut up in a school-room with children, with only lamps, or corn, or any other

objects, and require him to bring out results, and find out what he could do with things and not books, than to take half the exercises, so far as I have known them generally. The truth is, no teacher is fit for the business, who cannot stand up without a book, and give a lesson on a pin, or a leaf, or a rock, or anything that can be brought into the school-room, so as to interest the children and give instruction. If a teacher can give a lesson on a thing, he can do it on a principle in arithmetic. The fact is, we make the book literally and truly dead; the body without any semblance of life is what is taken by the children. There is nothing in it. It is a sin and a vice in the whole system of teaching that we have taught the *forms*, and not the *substance*; that we rely on *definitions*, and not on *things*.

I said I wished to take the lesson of Mr. Mason as a text. It is not confined to grammar or arithmetic or geography; it is to be carried through chemistry, astronomy, and every subject we teach; and those who have acquired any eminence in the art of teaching have abandoned the idea of relying on abstract definitions in communicating thoughts to children. Do you say that I condemn abstract definitions? No, by no means. The time will come when children can deal with them, and then the child is prepared for it; and the book is then ready for him.

Rev. Mr. Chase, of Watertown, Mass., thought this subject should be driven home and riveted. This is a starting point; if these principles are to be carried out, we have a great work to do in this institution. It may seem dry work to teach little children to sing by note; but it can be done; and I would say, teach them thoroughly or not at all. It is worse than useless to continue the prac-

tice of teaching children to sing a few songs by rote. It was proposed to introduce music into the schools of Nashua, and Mr. Tourjée of Boston was selected as the teacher; and when asked what book was to be procured, he said, no book, but Mr. Mason's charts. The charts were obtained and music was well taught, even by teachers who had never sung a note. As it can be done, it ought to be done. So other studies should be taught in the same manner, by giving the idea first, and then the principle. No individual can teach properly who does not go back in his own thoughts to his younger days, and recall his early impressions, so as to know how to meet the difficulties in the mind of the child. No one can teach English grammar as it was taught in my school-boy days. The definition which I learned was that "grammar is the science which teaches us to read, write and speak the English language correctly." I was learning to write, and at the same time studying grammar; and I supposed I should write better, for the knowledge I received from my grammar; but I did not see that I improved any faster in my handwriting on that account.

In regard to the matter of supervision which we have considered, I wish to say that committee-men generally have little time to keep themselves familiar with Latin, if they ever learned it; and they must generally be incompetent to instruct teachers who are fit for their work. There are many teachers who only need a little advice; but as committees are constructed, they cannot give that advice which is needed, coming as they do from all departments of business life. They have no time to give to the determination of questions which stand at the door of education. The way in which the lesson in music was given is the true one.

Mr. Z. Richards, of Washington, wanted to know how music could be taught in that city, where two or three such men as *Mr. Mason* are wanted for that purpose, but could not be obtained. The question was whether to have trained teachers going from school to school, whose business it is to teach the elements of music to the millions of children all over the country, or not. He could not solve that question. He doubted whether a person could teach music who could not sing; did not believe a word of it. How could a teacher know whether the child went up a step or down? There were hundreds of teachers who cannot tell the difference between two sounds.

Prof. C. O. Thompson referred to a case with which he was acquainted, in Arlington, Mass., of a female teacher who was absolutely unable to sing a note, or carry her voice through one measure or degree with any certainty. But she became interested in *Mr. Mason's* method, as it was practised by her sister in Boston. With the cordial co-operation of the committee and others, she undertook to carry out the system. She cannot sing now any better than when she undertook to teach; but she has singular tact in teaching. She was assisted in the details at first. She procured a small instrument, and the result was that her children learned to sing by note very well indeed.

Mr. Richards responded that he did not think any one could teach music if he did not understand it; no one could teach what he did not know. Then, how could music be taught while so many teachers know nothing about it? All are not so fortunate as to have a piano or a melodeon.

Prof. Thompson replied, that there are few human beings who cannot tell the note of a robin from that of a crow. He thought any teacher could learn to distinguish

the pitch of musical tones as easily as those of the voice in speech. Any teacher could learn in two hours enough about a melodeon. All that was necessary was to learn where C is, blow the the thing and push the note.

Mr. Stetson, of Maine, said that when in Chicago, a short time since, he learned that they succeeded well in teaching music there, and that those teachers who could not sing, succeeded best. Having heard that, he investigated the matter more fully, and had the statement confirmed. The secret of it was that they tried to understand and explain the theory well, and some scholar would lead the singing; and by thus throwing the practice upon the school, while the teacher simply superintended the exercise, the scholars learned to depend on themselves more, and actually learned faster.

Mr. Richards knew about music in Chicago. They could sing in Washington, too; some scholars could sing very well; but they had not been taught music, nevertheless. They could not answer the questions given here to-day. Teachers who know nothing about music might set some scholar to lead off, and they might thus sing very beautifully; but he did not understand *Mr. Mason* or anybody else to say that that was teaching music. How can such teachers explain the matter so that pupils shall go on from step to step?

Mr. Mason being requested to speak, thanked the Institute for having so attentively listened to his exposition and illustration of his method; and said that actual experiment was to settle the question of its practicability. He thought music should be mainly taught under the supervision of a regular music teacher; and with such supervision it may be successfully taught by the teachers in the schools. He had visited the Chicago schools, and

could testify to their success. The results there accorded with his experience in the Boston primary schools. Those teachers who set themselves earnestly at work succeed in teaching to the satisfaction of the music committee and the superintendent of schools, he believed.

Prof. Greene thought that where one female teacher was found who cannot sing, five were found who can, — some pretty well, some very well. But that is not the question. The point is whether you will go home and introduce Mr. Mason's method; and when that question is put, you shrink from it. Teachers would rather have a book. But when we can get teachers who can sing to take this method, and really present music so far as they know it, there will be a reform throughout the country, which will be permanent. But it will only be done when teachers shall be willing to launch into the work without a book. It is something like learning to swim, which a person can never do until he actually plunges into the water. If teachers will take the risk and really go before their scholars and try it, we shall have results. There is nothing to do but to go up to the blackboard and take the chalk; and if you are afraid, shut up your eyes. (Laughter.) After you have tried it, you will say, I wish I could teach other things in the same way.

Mr. Averill related the experience he had had in the schools of Northampton, stating that the proposition was made to introduce vocal music into the schools, and the question was raised how it could be done, because the teachers could not sing. I said, we must first get some person to come, and give us a start. We did so; we got a person to come and teach in the old way, and afterwards the teachers of the schools carried on the work successfully. If you can have some one start the subject, then

the regular teachers can go on and teach in the way that Mr. Mason recommends.

Mr. D. B. Hagar, of Salem, said they had had some recent experience on the subject of teaching music in the Salem schools. A little more than a year ago he proposed the matter of introducing music, at a meeting of the School Board. Before any action was had, notes were addressed to the teachers to ascertain how many of them could sing. One, a principal of a grammar school, having four assistants, reported that he was happy to say none of them could sing. He thought that it would be impracticable to introduce music. But Mr. Mason's system was introduced, and a teacher was employed to aid in teaching, for from half an hour to an hour per week, in each school. The result was very successful; and that very school in which the teacher was disposed to thank God that none of the teachers could sing, succeeded quite as well as any. Another school which was in a similar condition, was also about equally successful. All that the teachers learned, they learned from the instructor and the charts. The music teacher gives out the lessons, and drills the school a short time; and then says to the teacher of the school that he wishes certain principles taught before he comes around again. These principles the teacher can understand, and though she cannot sing a note, she can tell the difference between a long and a short note, can raise her hand up and bring it down, and see that the pupils do the same in proper time; and some boy is called out, who can sing, to lead the rest. There is a sort of competition among the brighter boys to be the leader; and thus, those teachers who cannot sing, actually accomplish as much good work as those do who can sing.

That is not theory, but matter of fact. A short time since four hundred of the children gave a musical exhibition; and at its close the teacher who was happy that he had no assistant who could sing, exclaimed, "Is it not a splendid success?" (Applause.)

Mr. L. Waterman wanted to regard the method of *Mr. Mason* as a type of all teaching. Why could not arithmetic be better taught on the same plan, and by teaching less of it? Why not let a boy or girl question the others, and lead them on in a more natural way than an older person would do it?

Mr. Philbrick wanted to indorse what was said by *Prof. Greene* in regard to the exercise by *Mr. Mason* being a type of lessons in other things. When *Mr. Mason* presented his system in a practical illustration in school, he thought the teacher of the school must be blind who could not see something to imitate in teaching other branches. The system has been in use in Boston now three years, and among the three hundred teachers in the primary schools he did not know of one who could not teach the children to sing. This is done by the teachers themselves, under the supervision of *Mr. Mason*; and though there may be a few who do not succeed very well, they are so few as not to be worthy of being considered with reference to the system of instruction as a whole. There are also three hundred or more teachers in the schools of a higher grade, who have 14,000 children in their schools, and they are doing the same thing. One man is appointed to superintend the music in them also; and he has, of course, all the benefit of *Mr. Mason's* influence and help. The result has been the most extraordinary we have ever known. The school-room which the teacher of music was most pleased to exhibit, was one

where the teacher could not sing at all; and the committee on music are determined to carry the same system through all the grades, from the lowest to the highest.

Mr. Cruttenden, of New York, said this subject came under his notice in the Normal School in New York city, and he expressed his concurrence in the idea that music as well as other branches should be taught in this way.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Mr. Richards expressed his gratification at having received so much light on the subject.

DISCUSSION.

The next subject in order was the question, "*To what extent should Oral Instruction take the place of Text-Books in Schools?*"

Prof. C. O. Thompson was called upon to open the discussion. He said:—

The question to be considered, next to that of supervision, demands the most careful consideration, and has the most vital connection with the interests of education. The fact is, the present reaction, if we may so term it, against classical education, is due to the fact that gradually, and somewhat unconsciously, instruction in the classics has degenerated into instruction in a few text-books. The influence of text-book classics culminated when the new edition of Andrews & Stoddard's Latin Grammar was published; and from that time the renaissance of a more rational method of instruction dates. Then men began to inquire whether good learning is to be reached by that strange and unnatural process, to which most of us were unfortunately subjected.

The most obtuse student of the times of Elizabeth

could not but note the more complete and available knowledge of the Latin language possessed by the notable men and women of that period, who studied the language without any grammar. The thought was at once suggested that the science of grammar is a growth of modern times, and that the scholarly and laborious authors of this almost universal classic had, honestly enough, completely reversed the old order of study, and substituted a manual of Latin grammar for a guide to a knowledge of the Latin language. They were turning the crank by the wheel. The speaker can assert, with some confidence, that it is possible for a student to know the whole of that mass of grammatical information, and still know very little about the language which armed Cicero with power, and clothed Virgil with beauty.

The classics, as a means of culture, must retain their place at the head of educational appliances. So long as language is the vehicle of thought, so long as it is the armory of oratory, so long as it is the harp on which imagination discourses all her music, so long as it is language, — the noblest gift of God to man, — that training which gives man the highest power of expression, must supersede all other training. A reform, once begun, moves on. The inquiry is now heard whether in all departments of instruction we have not allowed text-books to usurp the province of the teacher to an alarming extent.

Now, whatever be the methods of education, it unquestionably must depend upon the ability of the educator for its success.

At the outset of these remarks, I wish to protest against the form of the question, which makes a distinction between *oral* instruction and other forms. Educa-

tion is the same, from whatever source it may be derived. There are "sermons in stones, books in the running brooks." Every friend or acquaintance, every circumstance of life, however trivial, is a silent, but more or less powerful educator. Instruction is, however, the direct, and it should be the all-powerful educating force.

There is no proper instruction that is not oral instruction. There is no good text-book which is not the basis and inspirer of oral instruction. There is no teacher who teaches at all, who is not an oral teacher. I would as lief have a dumb man to teach as one who causes his scholars to cram themselves with the language of the text-books. Why, I knew a teacher, who, in attempting to carry out the theory of object teaching, required her pupils to repeat the text of "Sheldon's Object Method." (Laughter.) The question does not contemplate the various uses of libraries, but the proper work of the school; and, as such, I maintain that oral instruction should, in its genuine form and spirit, be the work of the teacher.

Education is either imparting knowledge, or it is training; and I think that training is more generally a result, than an object towards which special effort can be made. A great deal is said in a very ambiguous way about training. It is often confounded with culture,—the process with the result. The process is *instruction*; the result, culture. The work of the teacher is in exciting thought and communicating knowledge; in setting to work the intricate machinery of the mind, and furnishing it with material for growth. A disciplined mind is not a mind which can be recognized as the work of any particular teacher, but it is a mind which is balanced and self-centred, which moves in harmony with all great minds,

which has a common response to everything that is true and good, and a quick sympathy with all loveliness and beauty. That mind is a trained mind, and that training is a result.

What is the surest way to set the minds of children at work? Certainly it is by enlisting their sympathies; and there are not a few present who have been delighted more than once by exercises in common arithmetic by a gentleman now present, in which the highest degree of enthusiasm was excited at the very elegance of his arithmetical methods, and the very beauty and symmetry of his presentation of the subject. It makes no difference what the subject is; it makes no difference how abstract and how repulsive to the youthful mind it may be; the great secret of making children act upon it is to begin by stirring their sympathies. Knowledge may enter by suffering, but the teacher can unfold a joy even in suffering, and mitigate the agonies of struggle with foretastes of coming triumph.

It is interesting enough to notice, in academies and other isolated schools, the rise and fall of certain favorite studies. To the select school at North Baldwinsville comes this autumn a teacher who has enthusiasm in the study of physiology. Instantly all the "older scholars" evince great interest in this study, a large class is formed, and at the "closing examination" visitors are quite astonished at their proficiency. In a neighboring town English grammar is in the ascendant, and in still another natural philosophy. It sometimes happens that this sympathetic enthusiasm begets a nobler issue in these young minds, and that a love of knowledge for its own sake appears. You have heard it remarked of the teacher of such a school by some ardent pupil, "Why,

Mr. A. hears the lesson without any book." Alas! for the rarity! It may sound chimerical, but if every teacher could hear every lesson without a book, would not the results be unspeakably blessed? Is there any hope of these results so long as "hearing recitations" is confounded with "instruction"? Must we not labor earnestly for a radical reformation in this matter?

Now the failure of the text-book method, if I may use the term, is shown at a glance by the multitude of books. If we had one absolutely good arithmetic, for example, arithmetics would not be multiplied. But we have text-books on this subject without end. The arithmetics published within the last fifteen years would more than fill this hall. If the process goes on, the world itself will not contain them. What does this show? Clearly that there is no good book, as yet. I regard Mr. Walton's tables as the only step which has been taken within the last fifteen years in the right direction, if we except Colburn's sequel, perhaps. I just now remarked to him that I wished he had taken those tables, enlarged them to cover all the ground required, and put them in covers and sold them in that form for a quarter of a dollar a piece. He would then be a reformer and a benefactor.

I speak with great modesty and diffidence of a few notes I had the privilege of making upon the Saxony schools; for I know how easy it is for a person to travel a few thousand miles and to think he can tell everything about the places he has visited. I know how easy it is to go abroad, and then come back and declaim about the beauty of certain results obtained under circumstances quite unlike our own. But one thing I am sure of, and that is, that arithmetic is properly taught in the Saxony schools. The only text-book used there is a collection

of problems. What we commonly find as the exercises in primary arithmetics are *there* taught as chart and blackboard exercises. I looked around a little for the text-books when I went into the schools. I noticed a little volume, which was the beginning, middle, and end of text-books on that subject in those schools; and I was astonished to find, when I opened it, nothing but problems. But I found them arranged with the same strict philosophy which characterizes everything the Germans do. It was strictly philosophical, strictly progressive, and strictly easy. But not a word of a rule; not a word on the history of weights and measures; not a word on the politics of Germany; not a word on the intricacies of exchange; not a word on any similar matter, but simply arithmetical problems.

How was it used? First, the teacher went to the board and the scholars were alert to know what was coming. Previously, however, the lesson of yesterday was reviewed. The teacher then said, the lesson is in multiplication; and he put down an example and went through the process, requiring the scholars to follow him closely; and then called on the scholars to explain the process. Having gone through with the lesson in this way, he said upon such a page of this book you will find so many problems, and they are all done on the same principle; you must work them for your next lesson. The following day they would have them done; and having reviewed the lesson of the previous day, the new lesson would be taken up. Thus each lesson was reviewed from day to day, and every pupil studied and recited all the lessons, and thus became thoroughly familiar with everything. I believe that method just as good for children in America as for Saxons.

have mentioned one evil resulting from the indiscriminate use of text-books, which is the great number of books. I think there should be no text-books in arithmetic except collections of problems. I think the honored book called Colburn's Arithmetic is a much abused book. We use it too much, and at an improper time. I do not intend my little boy shall touch Colburn's Arithmetic till he is twelve years old, at least.

Another difficulty in the way of using text-books is the prominence it gives to special topics. Whether knowledge or discipline is the main thing sought by education, it is perfectly certain that knowledge must be the first object of effort. The duty of the teacher is to impart knowledge, to the end that training may follow as a result. There is too much of a disposition to regard the mind as a machine, and turn the crank; too much tendency to lay unholy hands upon this ark in which is God's image. My own little boy, five years of age, knows the names of about a hundred wild flowers; he knows the name of every bird that sings in the morning when he wakes; he is familiar with all beautiful things as any child, and I intend that he shall learn the simple laws of nature first; and when his mind reaches the state that he can understand the abstract processes of reasoning, I intend he shall be made familiar with them. But the teacher is the parent of the majority of children in all that concerns their education. If you restrict teachers to certain methods, you defeat the very end of teaching. Every good teacher should have large liberty; and teachers need that liberty in order to become good. To force them to use unnatural methods is the way to spoil them. They must adapt themselves, in topics as well as methods, to circumstances. I do not object to spelling or reading

books, though the reading-book need not be a collection of elegant rhetorical phrases. Let the teacher interest the children in knowledge for its own use; let him inculcate in all that he teaches, great and fundamental principles. A great deal that is taught of geography is stuff. I do not believe much in that which is taught as geography, which involves a knowledge of the boundaries of all the states, and does not include the reasons why cities are where they are, and reasons why rivers flow one way rather than another, the effect of climate, etc. But these are the last things you will find taught. It seems to me that what children ought to learn, they do not learn; and what they need not learn, they do; and this appears to be the result of making so many text-books. I do not believe we need text-books in geography. The method advocated by Mr. Fay is the one which I think is the best and natural method; I never have seen any other to equal it. Teaching in the Saxon schools is on that plan; and I do not believe we shall have any good teaching in this science until we adopt something like it. The pupils need maps, the teacher globes, and that is all.

Again, take the subject of English grammar, "the most abstract absurdity that ever was taught," as Henry Ward Beecher says. There is no one respect in which young people are more outrageously imposed upon nowadays, than in this of English grammar. What is gained in our schools, in general, from the time spent on this study?

If by English grammar is meant the ability to write, and read, and speak the English language correctly, then it is not taught. If every teacher had a copy of Greene's Grammar, which she was not allowed to carry into the school-room, and no scholar could have a book, I think

some knowledge of grammar could be taught. But so long as the knowledge of it is confined in text-books, I do not believe boys and girls will come any nearer to it. There is such a thing as good English, and when you hear it, it sounds almost like a foreign language. This is what should be taught by precept and example.

Sitting one evening on a porch at a hotel in Paris, I heard two persons not far from me in conversation in the Italian language (the most melodious of tongues). On the other side of me there were sitting two English officers, and while listening to their conversation I could not make out the dialect till I began to distinguish the words.

The English language, in its majestic fulness and power is concealed from most of our children by the load of grammatical chaff heaped upon it by over-zealous devotees of Lindley Murray. The children are defrauded of their birthright.

I listened for a half hour to the tones of voices of those English officers, without the slightest interest in what they were saying, from the sheer delight in the music of the tones and the rhythm of the sentences. It is such a language as no nation ever spoke, the Greek not excepted. It seems to me that this want of a proper use of the language should be laid at the door of text-books. I would not have text-books in grammar inside of the school-room; but I would have every teacher master of some one good system of English grammar, and then I would require the language to be taught first, and the principles of grammar to be skilfully deduced from it.

The great question, after all, is, what is a text-book? I cannot define it. I never heard anybody define it. But I will repeat my protest against the idea of text-

book instruction, and then add a suggestion or two in regard to what a text-book is.

No instruction can be successful, in the way I have attempted to portray, which does not proceed from the warm heart and active mind, and the earnest purpose of a living teacher. I would, as far as possible, in every school, from the lowest to the highest, have oral instruction, and nothing else; and I would give the text-book its place as the foundation-stone of oral teaching. In other words, I would make the text-book the teacher's tool for giving oral instruction. A text-book must be either an exhaustive treatise upon a subject, or a book of suggestions. A text is a suggestion, and that is the reason why the passages of Scripture taken by clergymen as the basis of their sermons are called texts. The text-book must then be a collection of texts; it must not be a book for scholars to use at all, but for teachers to use in instruction. According to this, an educational work is not a text-book. In teaching the classics, therefore, I would dispense with grammars at the outset, and show pupils the principles of construction as they crop out in the phrases of the language. The grammar for reference should be an exhaustive treatise on the elements.

Then, we have distinctly two sorts of text-books; one to excite the mind, and furnish the food for the mind of him who educates himself. These must be exhaustive treatises. The other kind is that which I have suggested as proper to be used in teaching arithmetic; which are collections of texts, for the guidance of the teacher. I should be very glad to hear a definition of a text-book which would cover all its legitimate uses. I do not believe one can be given. There is an objective use, and

a subjective use; and I do not see how any one book can have both features.

The sum and substance of all I have said is, that we must come back to this live, enthusiastic, energetic teaching; and the exercise which Mr. Mason gave as an illustration of his method of teaching music, may stand for a model for us, in its philosophy, in all teaching.

The reform demanded, if the idea of oral instruction outlined in these remarks be the true one, is radical and must have time; but that it is desirable and that it must eventually come, there can be little doubt.

Mr. Smith, of Dorchester. Do I understand the gentleman from Worcester to say that the English language should be taught at all?

Prof. Thompson. Yes, before the English grammar is taught.

Mr. Smith. When?

Prof. Thompson. At no particular time, but constantly.

Mr. Smith. Some time before one is eighty years old? Then how would you teach it?

Prof. Thompson. Before one is fifteen years old, and in the excellent and philosophical way which was described by Mr. Smith, in two recent numbers of the *Massachusetts Teacher*.

Mr. Smith. The way described in the *Massachusetts Teacher* is just the way not described this afternoon.

Mr. Daniel Crosby, of Nashua, thought Colburn's Arithmetic a suitable book for children long before they are twelve or fifteen years old.

Prof. Thompson, in response to Mr. Smith, said he would abolish the use of Grammars, and depend upon a teacher's own acquaintance with the principles, and his

ability to inculcate those principles as he sees the child can receive them.

Rev. Mr. Twombly expressed his deep interest in the subject. He agreed that quite as much depends upon the activity and life of the teachers as upon any book introduced into the school. He had seen schools where there was a very poor grammar, and yet there were living, energetic teachers, devoted conscientiously to duty, and serving upon all opportunities within their range to produce excellent results. A person who cannot go to the blackboard and illustrate any subject he is to teach, is not prepared to teach at all.

Although he agreed generally with Prof. Thompson, he thought there was yet a greater field for the text-book than he had allowed, though perhaps he could not define it exactly.

Our schools are not like those referred to by Prof. Thompson, where they have male teachers who have devoted their lives to the business of teaching. We must consider the material we have to deal with, both as regards teachers and pupils. In this country, "rough hew it" as we will, we know that the females have our schools principally in their hands, and while that is so, we must expect frequent changes in teachers.

I would not abandon all text-books. So far as I know, any text-book, not full of useless matter, may be employed by any ordinary child to advantage. Why not let children, after having had a principle explained to them, see and examine the statement of it in print? I think most children will be benefited by that. What harm can it do any pupil to see a simple straightforward definition or description? I would have every teacher take Greene's Grammar, or some other Grammar, and give

the necessary instruction, and then let the pupils look over the subject. Pray, if the teacher can learn so much at home, why cannot the pupils learn something too from the book? How is it that so many of our grammarians have become self-taught? Every man who has been taught to think at all has been self-taught, though he may have been guided by a judicious teacher.

Let our scholars have proper books; not too large arithmetics, with too many examples under one principle. Let the judicious teacher sift out the matters that are useless. A scholar is getting his training indirectly as a result of studying any good book.

How about geography? I believe it can be taught without text-books; but it will take twice the time; and with the best teachers it will not be done better without than with books. But we have not the time to expend in this way. Give us moderate text-books, thoroughly understood by the teacher, and allow the scholars to study them, and then give them careful and judicious instruction. I shall hold on to the old-fogy notion that text-books are of use in our schools.

Prof. Greene, in answer to the question, to what extent should oral instruction take the place of the text, replied, to no extent whatever. That was the last and true analysis. Oral instruction has its place, and should not trample on text-books. Neither should be exclusively used. We want to know how to teach children to get ideas from books. To do that, we want to do as was done this afternoon by Mr. Mason. When you can get text-books as aids of instruction, then let children use them. Text-books should be used in their place, and oral instruction always where it is needed.

[Adjourned.]

EVENING SESSION.

The Institute met at the North Congregational church in the evening, and was addressed by Prof. J. T. Champ-
lin, of Waterville College, Me., on "*Our Common School
System.*"

THIRD DAY.

THURSDAY FORENOON.

The Institute was opened with prayer by Prof. J. A. Allen, of Iowa.

DISCUSSION ON MUSIC RESUMED.

Mr. Payson, of Chelsea, was unwilling that it should go out, as the sense of this Institute, that those who cannot sing can teach music better than those who can. He thought that was a humbug. He would acknowledge that teachers in Boston do succeed, although they cannot sing, better than some who teach, that can sing. But take the gauge of the success of those who could not sing, and then by some process, if possible, give them the power to sing, and there would be found a difference in their success. If they succeed now, they would succeed infinitely better if they could sing. I wish the impression might go abroad that while we wish music taught by all in the best way possible, we would inculcate the necessity of having the voices of teachers cultivated till they can sing, if possible.

The President. I came to the conclusion, after listening to the discussion yesterday very carefully, that teaching singing was altogether a matter of faith, — that a teacher who has faith and cannot sing, will succeed better than one who can sing and has no faith.

DISCUSSION ON ORAL TEACHING RESUMED.

Prof. Thompson. It was impossible for me yesterday to go into details at all on the subject of oral teaching; but I thought the outlines could be filled up from what I said. But if the thing is to be fought out on this line, I want to put in one or two further remarks. I omitted to say that classes should be supplied with treatises on the different subjects they are pursuing; they should have access to such books that they may obtain whatever information is not given in their class exercise. Of course, then they would be expected to be carefully prepared in the instruction of the previous day, no matter from what sources they obtained it. In regard to geography, I think scholars should only have maps, and that the school should be abundantly supplied with whatever else is necessary.

J. W. Bulkley, Superintendent of the schools of Brooklyn, said he was not prepared to subscribe to a good deal that was said yesterday on this subject. I understand by oral instruction, that kind which carries out the spirit of the subject which the child has studied in his class-book. Hence, a child must have a text-book; we cannot ignore text-books. I do not believe that oral instruction is hearing recitations; and I do not believe that for a teacher to stand before his class and pour out all he may have gathered on a given subject, is the best way, or that that can be a substitute for study on the part of the pupil. We are too much in the habit of hearing recitations simply, and we give a pupil marks of debt or credit according to the correctness of his answers of the questions in the text-book. "Now the letter killeth; the spirit giveth life." Whatever a child may recite, he still may not be taught to good purpose by that alone. He may go away

entirely ignorant of the principles of the subject, and utterly incapable of applying it to use. What I understand by oral instruction is, to follow up every recitation with illustrations, with practical applications, and with such further information, gathered by a teacher whose mind is richly stored, as shall serve, not simply to instruct, but to impress upon the mind the truth that has been recited, and the principles involved in the subject of the recitation.

The gentleman said he would not commence the study of mental arithmetic till a child was fifteen years of age. Why, sir, in some departments of our city schools our boys make their exit before they are fifteen. We cannot hold them. New York, with its ten thousand wants, presses into service the boys and girls who were formerly kept in the schools. If not taught before that age, they will have no education at all. I do not believe there is any danger in putting a book into the hands of a child, provided it is properly prepared.

But if we stop there, we have lost the great idea of the educator, whose office is to draw out, not to pour in, — to draw out by a thorough system of training the mind of the child, so that he shall not only use his memory in learning his subject, but be able to think correctly. And I would not have him stop there; but would have him refer to the books of other authors than the one whose work he is studying. Let him have a comprehensive study; let him ask questions, and let pupil and teacher understand that the subject and not the book is the matter before them. Then comes the oral work, — and, so used, I think that is the place for oral instruction.

Hon. Nathan Hedges. You know I am not given to talking; but I listened with great interest to the discus-

sion yesterday afternoon; and while I heartily approve many ideas brought forth, I greatly regretted to hear it said that the gentleman would have no grammar in school, and would put the arithmetics and geographies out of school. I think that he takes back a part of it this morning. But at least it presents a topic for discussion.

What is the use of text-books in schools? The man who says text-books are necessary, falls far short of the truth; he who says, put them out of the school, deals in false doctrine. When I commenced my career in teaching, I started by resolving not to teach as I had been taught; and I have lived by my determination. I was taught in one way; I have taught exactly in another. How was I taught? Very much as a cousin of mine was. I asked her, How far have you got in English grammar? I have studied it seven times through, said she, and I am going to begin to parse next quarter. (Laughter.) How was I taught Latin grammar? I committed it, from beginning to end; and I did not know the first declension when I got through, nor any other; and I was not quite a fool either. I said, that was the wrong way. Consequently, when I began to teach, I got a little book like Goodrich's Latin Lessons, and gave the lessons so that the pupil would every day use what he was learning, and so lose nothing. I made it a rule that the subject should be mastered; that the pupils should be put in possession of the single idea, and not be let up till he did possess it. I would have him do one thing thoroughly, and then there would be one thing done.

Take the subject of English grammar. I have scarcely ever required a pupil to recite a lesson in English gram-

mar; I have never required a pupil to recite a rule to me *memoriter* from arithmetic. If I wanted to teach any particular rule in arithmetic, I would bring out the class and begin with simple exercises with a view of teaching one particular thing; and go on from step to step till they possessed it, and could work it out easily on the black-board. Then I would say, open your book and read the rule to me. They would say, that is what we have been at work by. Certainly, I have taught you the reason and the philosophy; now you have the rule. I do not want the rule first, but the principles, and then require the rule; and then the exercises. The arithmetic that has the fewest rules and most exercises is the best. It is so in every other branch of study.

We must take the child and consider him as a child, and begin as Mr. Mason did in teaching music; and he is the best specimen of a teacher I have met for a great while. I feel greatly indebted to him; and if I was going to begin teaching again, I would keep to that method of drill, drill, drill; and make the ground secure: And so, not to take longer time, the text-books are to have their place in the school; there is no dispensing with them; and they are to be made better and better. But the live teacher must precede the text-book, must beat the path and must teach the children to walk in it, and then see that they do walk in it.

Mr. Cruttenden of New York agreed with Prof. Greene that there was a place for both oral instruction and text-books, and that neither could supersede the other. Mr. Cruttenden exemplified his views by speaking of the elements of good teaching at some length, but was not able to sum up his conclusions, on account of the arrival of the hour for the next topic on the programme.

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THE EXAMINATION AND CERTIFICATING OF TEACHERS.

Hon. J. D. Philbrick, of Boston, read a paper upon this topic, which will be found in another place.

DRAWING was the next topic, which was presented by Prof. John S. Woodman of the Chandler Scientific School, Dartmouth College. He occupied an hour in presenting this subject, showing some of the methods which he would recommend to teachers, in giving instructions to beginners, and in speaking of the advantages to be derived from the acquisition.

At the close of Prof. Woodman's lecture, the Institute adjourned for dinner.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The first business in the afternoon was the presentation of the report of the Committee to nominate officers, which was accepted, and the list proposed was unanimously elected. They are as follows:—

OFFICERS OF AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,
FOR 1869.

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Vice-Presidents. — William Russell, Lancaster, Mass.; Henry Barnard, Hartford, Conn.; Ariel Parish, New Haven, Conn.; George B. Emerson, Boston, Mass.; Nathan Hedges, Newark, N. J.; Daniel Leach, Providence, R. I.; Zalmon Richards, Washington, D. C.; John W. Bulkley, Brooklyn, N. Y.; David N. Camp, New Britain, Conn.; John D. Philbrick, Boston, Mass.; Alpheus Crosby, Salem, Mass.; Ebenezer Hervey, New Bedford, Mass.; Henry E. Sawyer, Middletown, Conn.; Emory F. Strong, Bridgeport, Conn.; D. B. Hagar, Salem, Mass.; A. P. Stone, Portland, Me.; John Knee-

land, Boston, Mass.; B. G. Northrop, New Haven, Conn.; T. W. Valentine, Brooklyn, N. Y.; J. E. Littlefield, Bangor, Me.; Joseph White, Williamstown, Mass.; Charles Hammond, Monson, Mass.; Abner J. Phipps, Medford, Mass.; John W. Dickinson, Westfield, Mass.; Merrick Lyon, Providence, R. I.; Elbridge Smith, Dorchester, Mass.; Samuel W. Mason, Boston, Mass.; A. A. Miner, Boston, Mass.; Albert Harkness, Providence, R. I.; Charles V. Spear, Pittsfield, Mass.; David Crosby, Nashua, N. H.; William P. Atkinson, Cambridge, Mass.; W. E. Sheldon, West Newton, Mass.; Homer B. Sprague, Ithica, N. Y.; Geo. T. Littlefield, Charlestown, Mass.; J. P. Averill, Northampton, Mass.; F. F. Barrows, Hartford, Conn.; A. G. Boyden, Bridgewater, Mass.; Warren Johnson, Augusta, Me.; A. M. Payson, Portsmouth, N. H.; James S. Barrell, Lewiston, Me.; James A. Page, Boston, Mass.

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J. N. Camp, Burlington, Vt.; T. W. Bicknell, Providence, R. I.; J. E. Edgerly, Manchester, N. H.

DISCUSSION.

The topic for discussion this afternoon was "*The Proper Scope and Plan of Courses of Study for Public Schools.*" Mr. Moses G. Daniell, of Boston Highlands, introduced the discussion.

[The excellent paper read by Mr. Daniell has been mislaid. It was passed to the reporter, and was supposed to be among the papers given to the Committee on Publication. It was not, however, among them, and the Committee very much regret that their efforts to obtain it have been unavailing.]*

Rev. Mr. Hammond. The remark was made by the gentleman who has just opened this subject, that it is necessary to have a knowledge of the human mind, as a preliminary of laying out the programme of study for its improvement. It is necessary to have that knowledge, for a course of study for a limited space of time, for a course of study in the primary school, in secondary institutions, and in the highest institutions.

I noticed a recent remark in the *New Englander*, from an article written by Prof. Noah Porter of Yale College, who has recently published a work "*On the Human Intellect*," more exhaustive than any other written in this country. He has also written several articles under the general head of "*American Colleges and American Public.*" These articles are not yet completed. In the last one he makes this remark in regard to the course of study designed for the development of the human mind in its use. He says this substantially: that it is a great deal better for a perfect development of the human mind,

* Since found. See page 129.

within the limits assigned, to give close, thorough attention to a few topics of study, and attend to them well, than to undertake to study a multiplicity of branches with a view to the same end. If that idea were prevalent in the minds of those who devise schemes and courses of study, it would relieve teachers from a vast amount of fruitless labor and enterprise in order to meet what is called the public demand, that the pupils shall study such and such branches. Nothing is more natural than to attempt to meet this demand made by the pupils themselves. They come to the schools with a strong desire to study certain branches which they think will be for their improvement. "Studies do not teach their own use," as a great master in literature has said.

I suppose substantially the same difficulties occur in the graded schools in the cities, that occur in the related schools in the series, whether under the administration of public officials or of trustees. They are the same problems, and are attended with the same difficulties of solution. We had a list of these in the discussion held at Boston last winter and the winter before, by the classical teachers in the Commonwealth.

They first discussed the question, "Can there be such a thing as a uniformity of preparation for college?" The result reached, I think, was this conclusion in the minds of those present, that the attempt to do that thing would be hopeless; and I think another conclusion was, that it was not desirable that there should be uniformity; that it was not feasible for all colleges to teach in just the same way, nor desirable that they should; not desirable that students at Williams College should be educated in the same way as at Harvard, and that it would be better to have the diversity, as there always has been and always will be.

When there are such elements in the problem, how can we arrive at a proper conclusion? I can only say, that in those institutions sustained only by the public, this principle should be established, that such a course should be introduced as should meet the average want of the pupils in the school. If a scholar is introduced into the Grammar School, who cannot read and does not know the alphabet, evidently that is not the place for him; because, if the teacher gives him attention alone, the others suffer. So, if there is a very bright scholar in any school, who wishes to attend to a class of studies far above the average, it is not wisdom nor justice that the majority of students in that school should suffer, because it is a desirable thing in itself, or very interesting in itself that the teacher should train that scholar so much, for his own glory; but it is best that he should try to meet the general average. If that principle should be adhered to, it would strike out a great many specialities that take time and attract attention.

Then, there is another point. A particular study is brought before the teacher or pupils in a very interesting way; and instantly it is inferred that it is of universal advantage that that study should be pursued. Take, for illustration, the admirable lesson in music given by Mr. Mason. I understood the aim of the teacher, with his little class before us, to be just this and nothing more: to show how musical ideas could be so represented on the blackboard, that there should be an inter-communication between the mind of the teacher and the mind of the pupil. A beautiful method of teaching musical notation; but all the audience were interested in teaching music itself. The current thought of the Institute was, that all teachers should teach it, whether they under-

stood it or not. It seemed to me as though the conclusions arrived at were really ridiculous.

Any master of any branch can make it seem so desirable, that it shall appear that everybody should be taught in it. The same thing was seen in the admirable lesson on drawing that we had to-day. We cannot deny that everybody needs it, or that it is a source of pleasure to everybody; but it cannot be taught by every teacher in every school.

Then it comes back to this, that it is wise and judicious for teachers to have an end in adopting a course of study. Many who do this work look only at general needs; but the courses should be few in number and well attended to; the efforts should be made to bring every mind under their influence and control, and then the means of culture are attained. And it will not make much difference what that is, if well attended to.

I will mention a fact of some interest to the educational world of a change of study in Yale College, the principle of which is applicable in all lower grades of schools, to a greater or less extent. It is an experiment there, and the gentlemen do not express their judgment as to whether it is going to succeed or not. It is this: that at the end of the freshmen year, instead of dividing the class into alphabetical divisions, and appointing each division to an officer to have special charge of, and have them recite in alphabetical order in the recitation rooms, they divide the sophomore class into two or three divisions, according to the ability of the students as shown in the examinations of the freshmen year. That has been pursued for two terms, I think. One of the officers told me the recitations in the first division were splendid recitations, and that it was a delight to teach

such scholars; but that the recitation of the lower divisions were very poor. The course pursued was to give the higher division longer lessons; and they were able to do three times as much, and do it better, while the course pursued by the lower division was limited. The question was, whether that was the best way to educate those young men. The poor scholar would lose one great advantage of hearing a first-rate representation of the work given him to do, and which he could not do.

Mr. Richards thought the first item in a course of study was to learn to read; and it was a question in his own mind which should follow. The question should be settled, before selecting any study, whether the child is capable of studying at all. A child could not find out principles by study until he could understand language, *i. e.*, the use of words as they are related to each other in sentences. He was at loss to know whether it was the kind of study which was most important to be considered, or the amount or degree.

The subject was then laid on the table.

NECROLOGY.

At this time Geo. B. Emerson, LL.D., was introduced, who spoke as follows:—

Mr. President:—I come here, at your invitation, to speak of a noble teacher, an old and honored friend whom we have just lost, one of our former presidents, and still on the list of our vice-presidents—THOMAS SHERWIN.

He was resting from his work of more than forty years, and preparing, as he thought, for the labors and duties of another year, when he was arrested by the hand of Death. He had the happiness of dying, as he had always hoped he might die, without a moment's

pain, before he had begun to shrink from labor or to flag in spirit, before the brightness of his intellect had begun to be dimmed, or his capacity for exertion had begun to be lessened.

Mr. Sherwin lived a very beautiful life, full of precious examples for all. But we have time, on this occasion, to dwell only on those events and circumstances in his life, and those traits of his character, which have concurred to make him the admirable teacher he became.

He was born March 26, 1799, at Westmoreland, among the hills of New Hampshire ; but the family soon removed to Temple. Here he lost his mother, when he was seven years of age, and soon after went to live with Dr. James Crombie, an enlightened and generous man, who treated him as if he had been his own child, and won his life-long affection and gratitude. With him he remained until he was fifteen, employed sometimes on the farm, sometimes in the office, sometimes in business, — in those various duties which would naturally fall to the intelligent, beloved, and trusted son of a country physician. From Dr. Crombie he first caught the idea which ripened into a fixed purpose, of obtaining a liberal education.

This was a fortunate beginning of life. Occupied with the processes of agriculture ; riding through the woods and over the hills of a beautiful country ; becoming familiar with plants and animals, and all the appearances and changes of the year ; doing business with plain country people in workshops, mills, and markets, — he learned a thousand things from nature and living men which a town-bred lad has to take at second-hand from books.

“ While here he attended one summer school taught by

his sister, the usual winter schools of the district, and on one occasion, a private school, taught by the late Solomon P. Miles, who, being obliged to leave Dartmouth College in consequence of ill-health, taught a few pupils at the house of his father,"* the Rev. Noah Miles, the minister of Temple.

After leaving Temple, Mr. Sherwin attended for a short time the Academy at New Ipswich, and, in September, 1813, went to learn the clothier's trade at Groton, Mass. While learning his trade he was allowed eight weeks' schooling a year, at the Groton Academy, walking three miles to reach it. He served his employer faithfully, and remained with him till he was nearly twenty-one years of age, often working till midnight, and still finding time for study.

Fixed in his purpose of obtaining a collegiate education, he hired a young man to take his place, and, undeterred by want of means, he began resolutely the work of preparation.

"He was fitted for college at Groton and New Ipswich Academies, spending about six months at each; entered Harvard College in 1821, and was graduated in 1825. While preparing for college, and while an undergraduate, he taught district schools in Harvard, Groton, and Leominster, Mass. In 1825-6, he had charge of the Academy, in Lexington, Mass., and in 1826 was appointed tutor in mathematics at Cambridge, where he continued one year.

"In 1827, he engaged in engineering under Col. Loammi Baldwin, and was employed at that time in surveys at the Navy Yard at Charlestown, Mass., and at Kittery, Me., with a view to the construction of dry-

* Blood's History of Temple, p. 249.

docks. In 1827, he went as assistant engineer with James Hayward, in the first survey of the Providence Railroad. But, after the survey was about half completed, he was attacked with fever, brought on by exposure, and, being left with symptoms of pulmonary disease, was obliged to relinquish the profession.

"In December, 1827, he began in Boston a private school for boys, which he continued with increasing numbers for one year; at the expiration of which, he was elected sub-master of the English High School, then under the charge of Solomon P. Miles, his early teacher in Temple, and for more than a year his mathematical teacher at the University.* He continued sub-master until 1837, when, Mr. Miles resigning the office of principal, he was unanimously elected to fill the vacancy."†

I have quoted thus fully these facts in the life of Mr. Sherwin, because they seem to me to show the most admirable preparation for the duties of his profession. What a feeling of the value of an education must a man have, who has spent so many years and endured so many hardships to obtain it! What an intimate knowledge of the nature and character of children must he have gained in so many different schools! And this is the great and

* It is a curious and a not unimportant fact, that all the head-masters of the High School — there have been only three — were born and brought up in the country, where they became familiar with farming and other rural pursuits; that they all taught district schools in the country three or more years, while in college or before; that each taught a country academy for one or two years; and that each was, for one or two years, tutor in the department of mathematics and natural philosophy in Harvard College. Mr. Sherwin had the further advantages of learning a trade before he entered college, and of acting as a civil and naval engineer afterwards.

† Most of the facts above given have been taken from Blood's History of Temple, 1880, pp. 249-250.

precious attainment. I believe that most of the failures in the government of schools come from ignorance of the pure and what the Saviour calls the heavenly character of little children, from want of faith in children, and from a secret unbelief in the words of Jesus Christ in regard to them, — "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven." What varieties of instruction and discipline he must have seen! What a privilege to have had such a man as Miles for his teacher in childhood, and again at the college, and to have had his example, friendship, and influence for the nine years that he was associated with him! For Solomon P. Miles, of a sterner nature than our friend, was so true a man, so good a scholar, and really so kind and just, and always so well and conscientiously prepared, that he was one of the best teachers and most excellent disciplinarians we have ever had. Many a man feels at this day, and rejoices in, the kindly influence of his genial character and faithful instruction.

To all these extraordinary and peculiar qualifications, most of which seem to have been forced upon him by what seemed the very hardness of his lot in life, he, by his own choice, added another, which has heretofore, in this country, been considered one of the very greatest; but which of late, but I think not by the profoundest thinkers nor by men of the widest observation, has been greatly undervalued. He enjoyed at college the opportunity, which he faithfully availed himself of and richly profited by, of laying a broad and deep foundation in what President Hill calls an integral education. I mean a substantial course of general study, — of the natural sciences, of moral, æsthetic, physical and metaphysical philosophy, and of history, grounded upon a knowledge

of the Latin and Greek languages and mathematics. This knowledge serves as a special preparation for every future study, and renders subsequent attainments comparatively easy. And it is probably for this reason that Prof. Agassiz, Dr. Gray, Prof. Pierce, and President Eliot respectively consider this integral education as the most reliable foundation for the future naturalist, botanist, mathematician, or the student of useful arts, to build upon, as well as what it was originally intended for, — a preparation for the liberal professions.

The most striking characteristic of A. R. Sherwin's instruction was thoroughness in his own preparation. He of course made himself perfectly familiar with whatever there was in the text-book, so that he could, during a recitation, occupy himself entirely with the subject, and, instead of having his eye upon the book, have it upon the eye of his pupil. And not only did he possess himself with what was in the text-book, but with what should have been there; and commonly he took care to understand the subject much better than the author of the text-book had understood it. This is not often difficult, and, it is to be hoped, not very rare. But our friend habitually did more than this. He knew that most text-books are, or at least have been, the poor compilations of poor, unsuccessful scholars, made not so much for the teacher as for the trade; and he not only took a position that enabled him to look over the shoulder of the compiler, correct his mistakes and supply his deficiencies, but he kept up with the progress of science, and communicated to his pupils the most material of what had been added to it since the publication of the books from which the compilation had been made. That he might be able to avail himself of all recent dis-

coveries, he made himself familiar with the French and German languages, so that he might not be obliged to confine himself to the scientific journals in the English language.

I once attended an examination in astronomy conducted by him, in which it appeared that his pupils were familiar not only with all in the text-book, but with the leading discoveries in the science that had been made up to the very year in which the examination took place.

The last time I visited his school, a class was examined in moral philosophy, and showed not only a satisfactory knowledge of the chapters of the lessons, but the more important fact, that they were accustomed to think for themselves, and give their own opinions upon that great subject in their own language.

Mr. Sherwin not only kept himself fully acquainted with whatever was taught in his school, but from time to time himself taught nearly every branch. In this last visit of which I have spoken, he, though not the teacher of French, showed the attainments of the whole class in that language by setting them to read from the columns of a late French newspaper, which only one or two of the class had ever before seen, — a most satisfactory test.

This habit of not confining himself to one or two departments, but of occasionally giving instruction in branches most remote from each other, is a habit of vital importance to the mental welfare of the head of a great school. It not only secures him from the danger of considering one department more important than any other or than all the rest, but from the weariness, and from the cramping and dwarfing effect upon the mind, incident to confinement to one subject. A man obliged

to give, every day, four or five lessons of one hour each, will be tired to exhaustion if they are all upon one subject; while he will be comparatively fresh at the end if he have given instruction upon three or four different subjects. Variety of action is as important to cheerfulness, and to the health and elasticity of the mind, as variety of food is to the health and strength of the body.

It may be sometimes different in a school of science, like that of Agassiz, where a leading object is to advance the limits of the science, and where actual observation — real work — is an essential part of study, and gives relaxation from it. But we are speaking of a school for a limited number of years, where the end in view is as great a variety of thought and language and leading fundamental principles upon as great a variety of the essential subjects of thought as possible. "When I am tired of one," said Chancellor D'Aguesseau, "I look for rest and refreshment in another study." It is an almost fatal mistake to keep a boy at one study nearly all the time for months together, and hardly less dangerous is it for the teacher himself.

A great and blessed discovery was it for working boys in England, and not less blessed for working men everywhere, that a class taken from their workshops, and set to learning in school for some hours each day, will, in a week, accomplish *more work* than if they had spent the whole of each day in the workshop. The recent experience of some of the gymnasia in Germany, that boys taught but four hours a day make more progress than others taught for six hours, is to the same effect.

In conducting his lessons, Mr. Sherwin's object was to give each boy the fullest knowledge of the subject, and the power of expressing his thoughts in his own lan-

guage. He was therefore very impatient of answers in the words of the book, and took great pains to frame his questions so as to prevent them. He was constantly at work upon his lessons. The text-books were never complete enough to satisfy him, and he was much in the habit of carefully preparing original questions and new illustrations. One of his sons tells me that the amount he has left in manuscript of improved questions and new solutions — original processes — is immense. A higher object was the building-up of character in his pupils. For the attainment of this object his feelings, habits and manners as a gentleman gave him great advantages.

A boy comes before him for some misdemeanor, a boy who had always before been treated harshly by his teacher, suspected, snubbed, distrusted. In a few minutes of conversation with Mr. Sherwin, he finds that he is treated kindly, honestly, affectionately, respectfully, that he is believed and confided in. The boy goes away full of surprise, admiration, and gratitude; he feels what a great and noble thing it is to be believed, loved, and confided in by a kind, noble gentleman like Mr. Sherwin. In that moment the boy's character is changed. From that moment the boy is a gentleman, and remains so always.

The daily observance of the noble qualities of their teacher, his singular purity, his unselfishness, his perfect integrity and conscientiousness, with his great strength of purpose, must have exerted a constant and powerful influence in the formation of an elevated character.

"A noticeable feature in his system," says one who was an assistant for two years, "was the sympathy and confidence he reposed in those associated with him as

teachers. Every teacher was left free to follow his own methods, the only requirement being that a certain result was to be attained. I recollect his speaking of the different systems pursued by those having charge of the various classes, and his remarking that this one got work out of the pupils in one way, that in another, and commending each for the peculiar quality by which, in different ways, every set of pupils in the same class was brought, at the end of the year, to about the same 'stand point.' His confidence in his pupils was equally marked. He seemed desirous to cultivate the individuality of each, and to discover by what advice and guidance the various powers of each might best be developed. He never watched them to discover 'petty faults,' but he trusted in them and treated them with confidence; and in the English High School, more than in any other I ever saw, was perceptible the feeling of responsibility and manly pride among the boys, a disinclination to do anything covertly or unfairly. He told me that for twenty-three years (that was some time since) he had not punished a pupil. He reasoned with them when they had committed an offence, and I never knew a boy proof against this course of treatment. Having been myself about two years an usher in the school, I can recall many a case where a boy found intractable in a lower room was sent to the principal for correction. He would talk with them quietly, earnestly, and kindly, and, sooner or later, the offender would acknowledge his fault, and announce his determination to do better."

— Mr. Sherwin's government was paternal; a system often talked about and sometimes aimed at,— in his case truly attained. He treated every boy as if he had been his son; with the added delicacy that comes from the

fact that the boy had another father, with whom his relations were naturally higher and more intimate.

This paternal feeling in a teacher does not render him blind to the faults of a pupil. Quite the contrary: he sees the fault, but sees it with the eye of a father; reproves with a warm sympathy which encourages, with a deep sense of justice which does not let him forget the good qualities because they have been overshadowed by a moment's thoughtlessness or by an hour of indolence.

I suppose Mr. Sherwin never intentionally hurt a boy's feelings. In his latter years he had too much of a father's interest in the boy; in his whole life, he was by nature too much of a gentleman, and indeed he was a real gentleman. Simplicity, truth, sincerity, honorableness, sympathy, gentleness, the essential controlling qualities of a gentleman, were parts of his nature. A just man is one who always has perfect respect for the rights of all others; a gentleman is one who always has perfect respect for the feelings of others.

He had too much of manly taste to be over-nice about the fashion or setting of a coat, a boot, or a necktie; while he had a delicate regard for the finer preceptions of his female friends, which effectually secured him against slovenliness or negligence. He had been in all conditions of life, and he felt sympathy for those in all conditions. He had a warmth of heart and a nobleness of nature which did not allow him to be elated at his eminent success, and take it all to himself; but he felt that a different turn in the wheel of fortune — what he would have called a different allotment in God's providence — might have left him in a position very different from that which he had achieved.

A man with these lofty qualities could not be an ordi-

nary citizen. He must have been and he was dearly loved by his friends, honored by his neighbors, and almost adored by his family.

He led a quiet, serene, cheerful life; his time and thoughts mostly occupied, not with his own advancement, but with the welfare and prosperity of his school, the great object of his life: himself a living, consistent example of all the virtues and habits which he inculcated, and of the sacredness and satisfaction of duty.

Mr. Sherwin was a sincerely and consistently religious man. The fervent extempore prayer with which he always opened school must have had a steady and strong effect upon his pupils in awakening and confirming their faith in God and in man. This daily, humble expression of love and reverence for God, of a sense of His everlasting presence, of the immortality of the soul, of responsibility, of the sinfulness of sin and the need of constant help and mercy,—all these infinite truths, humbly uttered by a man whom they knew to be the personification of truth and justice and love, must have had an effect never to cease on the feelings and convictions of his reverent hearers.

If, immediately after his prayer, he had shown himself cross and hard and cruel, or passionate and unjust, the effect might have been wholly different. It might have led to the suspicion that his words were idle and himself a hypocrite. But, coming from a man whose whole life was in keeping with his words, they could hardly fail to have a mighty and an enduring influence.

Mr. Sherwin was a happy man. He was an ardent patriot, and, at the beginning of the war, gave all his sons to the service of his country; and they served faithfully and with distinction. During their absence,

exposed and in dangerous situations, it was not in human nature that he should not sometimes feel anxious and sad, and his face become paler and thinner, and his step less elastic. But as soon as the war was over, he became himself again, with all his pristine vigor and cheerfulness. The work of the school has never been better and more successfully done than it has been during these last three years. The condition of the school was never better, its reputation higher, or its prospects brighter, than at this moment.

I will close with the following resolutions: —

Resolved, That in the death of Thomas Sherwin we lose a friend who has always commanded our entire respect, affection, and admiration, by his genial and winning manners, his unpretending frankness and candor, and his quiet energy, for his profound respect for truth, his steadfast firmness and unselfish devotion to duty, his spotless integrity, and the beautiful simplicity of his character.

Though for many years at the very head of his profession, he disarmed envy by his unassuming modesty and the real excellence of his scholarship, and secured friendship by his transparent truthfulness and sincerity. His well-deserved distinction never lost him a friend nor made him an enemy. Those who have been most familiar with good schools have been most ready to admit the almost faultless excellence of that over which he for so many years presided.

Resolved, That, as teachers anxious for the advancement of our profession, we owe Mr. Sherwin a debt of gratitude for the signal success of his endeavors to stimulate each pupil by appeals to the highest motives only, — the desire to do right for the sake of right; to surpass, not others, but himself; to bring out and exercise as

variously and fully as possible all the faculties with which God has endowed him; to fit himself, in the most thorough manner possible, for the duties and responsibilities of life, and to endow himself for all the exigences and conditions of life; and by the conviction that he is the child of God, and created for an immortality of ever advancing and enlarging conceptions and attainments.

Mr. Philbrick. I rise to second the resolutions presented. It will not be in my power to add anything to what has been said, and it is not necessary at this time. It was my privilege to become acquainted with Mr. Sherwin many years ago. Probably my acquaintance runs back further than that of any individual present to-day. Twenty-seven years ago I made my first visit to the English High School, then under his charge. And two years subsequent to that, it was my great good fortune to serve under him as an instructor in that school; and ever since that service commenced, in 1844, my acquaintance with Mr. Sherwin has been most intimate.

I can only bear testimony to every word that has been said of his ability, his character, and his eminent services. I can indorse, with certain knowledge, the statement which has just now been made, that (certainly for the period of twenty-seven years, and I presume from the commencement of his services in the High School) he was a very accomplished teacher; and, from that time till his death (which was the next day after finishing his year's work), he was constantly a growing, a progressive teacher; and that the last year of his service was really the most faithful and the most completely successful of any one of the forty-one years of his service in that school. And when that is said, as I believe it can

be said with truth, it is the highest eulogy that can well be pronounced upon any teacher.

Looking over the teachers of this country, although we can recall the names of many of great distinction and great merit, there is no one of the number within my knowledge who has occupied so important a position in the public service for so long a period with so uniform and eminent success.

Mr. President, our departed friend was not only a teacher of great success and eminence; he was a large-minded and accomplished educator. His labors and services were not confined to the studies of the school-room, but his mind took in all the great interests of education of all grades. He co-operated with the members of this Institute to the day of his death, and with the State associations also, with earnestness and fidelity, and thus was instrumental in exerting a valuable influence. He was a student of education at large; and this accounts for his success as a teacher. He was a very exact, thorough, and painstaking scholar in the whole circle of science and literature.

But, sir, a man is a man before he is a teacher, or a doctor, or a lawyer; and to be a great and successful teacher, as he was, it was necessary first to be a superior man; an honest man, if ever there was an honest man; a just man, a conscientious man. Sir, I will not proceed with the enumeration. Having been for so long a period associated with Mr. Sherwin, I cannot call to mind anything in manner, in conversation, in his utterances, not becoming in any degree a true gentleman, an accomplished teacher, and conscientious Christian. It is a fruitful theme. He has left a record for our imitation, and well will it be for us if we study it and follow it.

The resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Rev. Charles Hammond, after a few appropriate remarks in reference to the life and services of the late Abraham Andrews, of Charlestown, offered the following resolution, which was also unanimously adopted:—

Resolved, That, in the removal by death of ABRAHAM ANDREWS, Esq., of Charlestown, Mass., we lament the loss of one of the founders and useful members of this Association, and that we recognize his claims to our remembrance for his excellent character as a man, for his devotion to the cause of education, and for his abundant success in his long career as master of the Bowdoin School in Boston.

EVENING SESSION. CLOSING EXERCISES.

At the commencement of the evening session, Prof. Allen, principal of the Monticello Normal School, Iowa, gave an illustration of his method of teaching map-drawing to young scholars. It was listened to with great interest.

The President then called on members of the Institute, from various sections of the country, to give statements as to the condition and progress of education in their several localities.

Mr. Richards spoke for Washington, D. C., referring to the recent appointment of a superintendent of the schools for white children, the value of a newly erected school-building (\$200,000), the organization of the different boards of education, the number of schools, and the general features of the administration of school affairs. In conclusion, he spoke of the harmony with which the white and colored people co-operated in the educational as well as the municipal affairs of the city, in which respect he thought there was real progress.

Mr. Crosby, of Nashua, spoke for New Hampshire, expressing the opinion that in respect to real education, they were not in advance of what they were forty years ago. He did not think good manners as much attended to as formerly. He thought children should be first taught to respect authority, whether at school or at home; then begin to learn their language, which could be done in many ways. He thought teachers would do well to give addresses in their own neighborhood on the subject of education and the wants of the schools, and thus interest the people in each locality; and the people, thus led to understand what is needed for the benefit of the schools, will generally be found ready to assist an earnest and wise teacher.

Mr. Dunbar, of West Bridgewater, spoke with special reference to the importance of sustaining the Institute by purchasing the annual reports.

Mr. Bulkley, of Brooklyn, spoke of the number of children in his city (about 120,000), the number of teachers (800), and contrasted this large number with the number in 1854, when the school population of Brooklyn was only 18,000; with three hundred teachers. In regard to the importance of education throughout the country, he thought the matter never assumed such an interest as now, from the opening of the West and South to the efforts of those who would labor to introduce good schools, and from the fact that even China is sending her population so rapidly among us. If our country is to be preserved in its integrity, school-masters must go through these places, and the school, college, and church must be planted by Christian men. He wanted to make the young men and young ladies feel the importance of the great work to be done.

Mr. Webster, of Boston, referred to what New Hampshire was before he left it a few years since, when he was sure Concord was the banner town. He thought education in a prosperous condition in the State: Dartmouth College was never so well endowed as now, and other institutions were flourishing.

Mr. Smart spoke for Indiana. He also expressed his pleasure in attending the meetings of this Institute. He was glad to be a listener and learner here. New England stood prominent in the work of education, not only doing her own work well, but sending out a large army of good workers to the West. While she does this, there need be no fear that she will be "left out in the cold." She may rather hope to welcome the teachers from the West at these annual gatherings, as they come to visit these beautiful hills and rocky shores.

He thought that in regard to supervision and examination of teachers, perhaps New England might learn something of the West.

Mr. Lancaster, of Savannah, was invited to speak of education in Georgia, where he said he had resided twenty-three years, and had been engaged in teaching during that time. There is no public school system there. There are about one hundred counties, and in the parts most thickly settled, there are academies which have been established for a long time, and were once schools of high character, in which boys were fitted for college, while at the same time there were those learning the alphabet. They were incorporated schools, under a board of trustees; and nearly all the teachers were graduates of some college, most of whom, before the war, were from the North. The demand for teachers from the North ceased two or three years before the war, in consequence of the

political asperities of the times. At present there is no call for Northern teachers, not from any feeling of hostility, but on account of the changed condition of the people. There are many graduates who were once engaged in some profession, who are now obliged to devote themselves to teaching; and hence, there is a home supply, that of female teachers being, perhaps, greater than that of males. In the city of Savannah as many as thirty names are on the roll of applicants.

There are great and almost insuperable objections to a system of public schools, arising, in a great measure, from the sparseness of population; and it has always been repugnant to the ideas of the people to be taxed for public education. In some of the large cities public schools have been established; and it is intended to extend them throughout the State. The Peabody fund was spoken of as being an important auxiliary in building up schools in that State.

In Savannah, the first public school was established in 1854, and had some one hundred and seventy-five pupils. Another was established in 1856, having two hundred and fifty. Those schools were continued during the war. Since that time others have been established, and there are now about 1,400 scholars. A Girls' High School has been established within the past year, for a beginning, which is intended to furnish teachers for the lower grades of schools.

Rev. Mr. Harmon addressed the Institute, briefly expressing his gratification at the spirit that had characterized its meetings and discussions. He was glad to hear so frank and free utterances from those who had spoken. He was pleased on account of the good influence that must result from the meeting, to the citizens of Ports-

mouth. And he believed the schools in the State were continually improving and would continue to improve.

Hon. E. A. Stevens, of Portsmouth, in behalf of the citizens, returned their thanks to the Institute for the pleasure given them in being allowed to entertain its friends. Their only regret was that they could not do it better, on account of the absence of so many families from the city, and the fact that so large an addition is made at that season to the families of those remaining, by company from abroad. He felt that the city was greatly indebted to the Institute, as its influence would be felt in the schools. He regretted that so few of the citizens had enjoyed the instruction given by the discussions and lectures.

Mr. Demerit, of Portsmouth, followed, expressing his satisfaction with the exercises to which he had listened.

Mr. D. B. Hagar, from the committee on resolutions, offered the following, which were unanimously adopted:—

Resolved, That we gratefully acknowledge our obligations to Mr. Lyman D. Spaulding, Dr. William R. Preston, Hon. Ezra A. Stevens, Mr. Charles C. Buzzell, Mr. A. M. Payson, and other gentlemen of Portsmouth, for their kind and efficient labors in making the local arrangements for the accommodation of the Institute during its present session; to the citizens of Portsmouth, who have opened their hospitable doors for the entertainment of the ladies in attendance; to the Wardens of the North Church, for the free use of their church edifice; to the gentlemen who afforded so much pleasure to the Institute by their excellent singing; and to all other persons in Portsmouth who have in any way promoted the success of this meeting.

Resolved, That our gratitude is due the several gen-

tle men who by their lectures, addresses, and essays have largely contributed to our interest and instruction.

Resolved, That to the numerous railroad companies that have favored the members of the Institute with passage tickets at reduced rates, we give assurance that their liberality is thankfully recognized.

Resolved, That we cannot permit our esteemed President, Mr. John Kneeland, to retire from office without cordially expressing to him our high appreciation of the fidelity, efficiency, and felicity which have distinguished the performance of his official duties; and that we tender him our earnest wishes that he may be blessed with a long continuance of health, happiness, and usefulness.

Resolved, That, rejoicing in the educational success and the social enjoyments of this, our fortieth annual gathering, we now bid one another a hearty "God speed you!" and pledge ourselves anew to faithful efforts in behalf of universal education.

The President, in concluding the exercises, returned his thanks for the assistance he had received from members in the discharge of his duties. He thought that the practical exercises of this meeting had been of exceeding value. The kind and hospitable reception they had received from the citizens had made all feel at home. Expressing kind wishes for all, and repeating his thanks, he closed, by hoping that next year we should all meet somewhere in Massachusetts, and, before many years, again on the old Strawberry Bank, in New Hampshire.

The doxology was then sung, in accordance with usage, and the Institute adjourned *sine die*.

EXAMINING AND CERTIFICATING TEACHERS.

BY JOHN D. PHILBRICK.

ALL school economy centres in the teacher, for the school is what the teacher makes it. Do what you will for a school in the way of buildings, equipment, endowments, patronage, but after all the *teacher* is the pivot on which success or failure turns. *Such as the teacher is, such is the school.* You have only to photograph the teacher morally and intellectually, and you have the picture of his school.

If the study of educational problems and educational history teaches any one lesson more distinctly than another, it is that educational systems are good or bad, successful or unsuccessful, in proportion as they provide for securing and retaining the services of competent teachers. And yet this is the very lesson which the people at large most obstinately refuse to learn. To some extent they do, indeed, admit its truth in the abstract, but too often, when they come to act with reference to it, they throw their influence on the side of opposition to its teachings.

And hence the slow progress of educational improvement.

There are four cardinal topics under which all considerations of educational economy relating to teachers naturally arrange themselves.

First in order is the education of teachers. In most countries where schools for the education of the children of the people are maintained at the public expense, it is deemed a wise policy on the part of the State to provide for the professional training of the teachers needed in the public service. In some foreign countries this policy has long been acted upon and with the most satisfactory results, but in our American States, although to a certain extent adopted theoretically, the people are slow to put it in complete and full operation.

Secondly, the examining and certificating of teachers; the means employed for testing the fitness of teachers for their profession; with the view to exclude the incompetent, and to admit as members of the teaching corps only those who are capable and devoted to their chosen calling.

Thirdly, the compensation of teachers; for however liberal the means provided for the education of teachers, and however complete the machinery for testing the qualifications of candi-

dates for admission to the profession of teacher, the talent desired can never be attracted to this arduous and self-denying service and retained in it, without the inducement of suitable pecuniary reward.

Fourthly, inspection or supervision to encourage, aid, and guide teachers in the performance of their duties, and to examine and judge the result of their work.

It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of any one of these four topics, for they are all vital topics of educational economy. But the question before us, limits us at this time to the consideration of the third;—*the examining and certificating of teachers.*?

This subject may be conveniently considered under three heads.

1. The objects and the importance of properly guarding the entrance to the profession of teaching, by serious examinations.

2. The present condition of our school system in respect to this element, whether in view of its existing provisions, or of the practice under those provisions.

3. What is the best system of examining and commissioning teachers, which experience has as yet developed.

First. Concerning the first of these topics, little need be said among enlightened educators. In the first place, entrance to the profession ought to be guarded by tests of fitness, for the sake of the competent teachers who have already entered. It is obviously for the interest of all well-qualified teachers that ignorant and uncultivated teachers should be excluded altogether from the business. In proportion as the unworthy are kept out, and the worthy let in, the respectability of the profession is raised. It is useless to pretend that teaching is a learned profession as long as there is nothing to hinder ignoramuses from disgracing the occupation. Besides, where there is no recognized standard of merit among teachers, as a graduated system of certificates, based on fair tests, would afford, modest worth is constantly liable to be superseded and kept in the background by shallow pretence, self-asserting egotism, and wire-pulling cunning, to say nothing of favoritism on the part of committees. It is of the utmost importance for the encouragement and improvement of the profession of teaching, that every practicable means should be employed to secure to capacity and merit their just recognition and reward, and that provision should be made for

the fairest competition between candidates for responsible and lucrative positions. This is what a good system of examinations is designed to accomplish.

But if such examinations are calculated to serve the interests of teachers by elevating the dignity of their calling, and doing justice to their honestly earned accomplishments, they are indispensable to the successful working of a system of public instruction. To build costly school edifices, to vote liberal salaries to instructors, and to provide for the requisite supervision, without making adequate provision for duly testing the qualifications of the persons employed to impart instruction, would be clearly a preposterous proceeding; a proceeding not more wise than that of the farmer who should enclose his well-cultivated cornfield with a costly fence, and leave the bars down for the cattle to enter and destroy his crop. So long as the meagre salary paid to teachers affords no inducement for persons of education and ability to engage in the business of teaching, it is indeed of comparatively little use to set up a high standard of qualifications for the office, and insist on superior attainments as the condition of obtaining a teacher's certificate.

But in proportion as the teacher's position is

made comfortable and desirable, it becomes important to demand a high degree of professional skill and teaching power. The guaranty of capacity ought to be put, if possible, beyond question. If school authorities neglect to take the security against ignorance and incompetency, and in favor of learning and skill, which a judicious system of tests and probations might afford, they unquestionably fail to use to the best advantage the means of education intrusted to their hands. Good pay should be offered, and then stringent tests of capacity should be applied. And when teachers have fairly passed the prescribed ordeals, and received their appointments, they ought to feel secure in their positions during efficiency and good behavior. In a word, we may say that the importance of the means of guaranteeing the capacity of teachers is almost synonymous with the importance of education itself.

It is not pretended, of course, that it is practicable to devise a scheme of examining and licensing teachers which shall do equal and exact justice to all teachers, or exclude altogether from the school-room unworthy and incapable persons. But assuming it as admitted universally, that some kind of examination is indispensable, the

practical thing to do in this connection is to determine what is the best system, and endeavor to put it in operation.

Secondly. What, then, are the theory and the practice among us in respect to this subject? In the New England States, the legal provisions for determining the qualifications of teachers are essentially uniform. This duty belongs exclusively to the town committees. It may be said in general that they are bound to examine only candidates for existing vacancies in the schools under their care, and to grant certificates, not to all who pass a satisfactory examination, but only to such as actually receive appointments. This certificate is no professional advantage to the teacher whatever. It gives him no professional status. It is worthless to the holder as soon as he crosses the boundary line of the town in which it is issued, and even within that line it is valid only until the end of the engagement, which is usually for a year or a less period. Its sole virtue consists in its entitling the holder to collect of the town his stipulated wages during the period of his service. From the fact that the certificate is given by a local committee, and that it has only a local and temporary validity, and confers no professional privileges, immuni-

ties, or distinction, it does next to nothing to make teaching a recognized profession. Indeed, it was never intended as a boon to teachers, but only as a protection to the community.

But in practice, I believe that the examination of teachers in New England affords to the community no adequate guaranty of capacity and character. If our teachers are, as a class, worthy and comparatively competent, it is not because of the successful working of the system of examinations, but in spite of the system. It is because our colleges, academies, and high schools send out so many intelligent persons from whom our teaching corps can be readily recruited. I think I am right in saying that to a very great extent the appointments are not made as the result of examination, but that after the appointments are determined mere perfunctory examinations follow in compliance with the letter of the law, its spirit being wholly ignored. The administration of the system is probably more efficient and faithful now, than it was a generation back. But the system itself is extremely imperfect and insufficient. A particular case within my personal knowledge occurred some years ago, which throws some light on the nature of the system. A young man had been engaged to keep his first school, and had

already taught two weeks of the term, when he was summoned before the committee for examination, in compliance with the requirement of the law. At the time and place designated, he presented himself. It was on a cold winter evening, at a respectable farmer's house. He went not much fearing a total failure, and yet being without experience in such matters he had some vague misgivings as to the result. On arriving, he was soon conducted away from the family, including some of his pupils, gathered round the blazing hearth, to a fireless upper room dimly lighted with a tallow candle. Being seated at a table opposite the chairman of the committee, the interrogatories and answers proceeded as follows :

Chairman. How old are you?

Candidate. I was eighteen years old the 27th day of last May.

Chairman. Where did you last attend school?

Candidate. At the academy at S——.

Chairman. Do you think you can make our big youngsters mind?

Candidate. Yes, I think I can.

Chairman. Well, I am satisfied. I guess you will do for our school. I will send over the certificate by the children to-morrow.

This case I said occurred some years ago, but would it be quite impossible to find its counterpart at the present day? At any rate, I know that there are even large city schools where the teachers have been appointed for years in succession without any examination whatever. One of the incongruities of the system is that the most learned, accomplished, and experienced teachers are required by law to be subjected to examination by any school committee-man who may happen to be elected to the office, whenever they change their position from one town or city to another. There still exists also the manifest absurdity of requiring graduates of normal schools, who have passed through a protracted and thorough course of scholastic and professional training with success, and received diplomas from the highest State educational officials, as a condition of entering the poorest district school, to be subjected to an examination by the local committee, whatever may be the want of qualification for such a task such committee may possess. I think, then, I am justified in assuming, although time fails me to present the complete demonstration of the correctness of the position, that the systems of examining and certificating teachers in New England are radically defective, both in theory and practice.

Thirdly. What is the best existing system which experience has as yet developed for elevating the character and dignity of the teacher's profession, and of guaranteeing to the community capacity on the part of the teachers employed?

Without undertaking to present the description of a theoretical plan for the accomplishment of the objects in view, it seems to me more profitable to give the outlines of the systems in operation which appear to be producing the most satisfactory results. And first allow me to glance at this feature of the educational systems of some of the foremost of foreign countries.

Prussia. Here no person unprovided with a certificate of fitness can be appointed master or teacher in any school, whether public or private. He obtains his certificate by passing an examination before a commission nominated for the purpose by government. The examinations are in number usually two.

1. The first examination takes place at the time of entry upon the career, when the candidate has completed his preparations. For those candidates who have been trained in a Normal School, it takes place at the conclusion of the Seminary course. This is held once a year, usually before Easter, and is attended with great

ceremony. It is conducted by the director and teachers of the seminary, each examining in his own subject. It is superintended by a government commissary, who is present through the whole of it, and who may take any part in the business of examining he pleases. This commissary is the School councillor of the province, the councillor of the department in which the seminary is locally situated being present as an adjunct.

But other persons not trained in a Normal Seminary are not excluded from becoming teachers. The same commission who examine the seminarists are ready to examine all other candidates who present themselves at the same time. The examination of these candidates is, however, separate from that of the graduating seminarists. This class of outside candidates are required to bring a medical certificate, a written outline of their previous life and occupations, testimonials from their teacher, testimonials from the pastor and civil officer of their parish of moral and religious qualification for the office of school-master.

The examination of both classes of candidates turns upon certain prescribed matters of study in the normal schools, and is partly written, partly oral, and includes the giving of a trial lesson.

Those who succeed in passing this first examination receive a certificate, of which there are three degrees of merit: No. 1, "very well qualified"; No. 2, "well qualified"; No. 3, "sufficiently qualified." As the classification is of great consequence to the future prospects of the candidates, the greatest care is taken to fix exactly the amount of performance which shall entitle to each of these grades respectively. The same lithographed scheme is applied to all the commissions, divided into as many kinds as there are subjects of examinations.

The performance of the candidates under each of these heads is valued: only the three predicates, "very good," "good," "sufficient," being employed in the valuation. Upon the aggregate of these separate valuations the grade of the certificate granted depends, in this way: no candidate can obtain a certificate No. 1 who has not obtained a "very good" in the three subjects ranked as most important, and so on.

Possessing his certificate, the candidate is qualified for any appointment that may be offered him; but he can only be placed as assistant or provisional teacher, he cannot yet be appointed "school-master"; he must first serve on probation in a subordinate capacity three years, and

then pass a second examination. He is at liberty during this probationary period to throw up his place, and quit the profession; but if he does so, he must pay up, if a normal graduate, the whole cost of his training in the seminary.

2. Not earlier than three and before the expiration of five years from the time of passing the first examination, the assistant teacher must present himself for his second. He is not to wait to receive notice of this, but to present himself on the day appointed for the second examination *abermalige Prüfung*, having first sent in his testimonials, including his first certificate, to the department councillor. This examination is not in practice severe. The examinee may be, but hardly ever is, sent back. The most that depends upon it is the good opinion of the authorities, which may effect his promotion. The examiners have the record of his first examination before them, and the teacher is expected to have made good such parts of his training as were there marked defective. At this time he is examined chiefly in the art of school-keeping. This examination wholly turns upon professional skill, and how each matter ought to be handled in a class of a given age, and not on the matters themselves. The candidate has generally an essay

on some point of school management to write, a paper of questions, and half an hour's oral examination. The second examination has more the character of a review of conduct than of a test of attainments. During the three years intervening between the first and second, the assistant teacher is considered to be under the special guidance of the school councillor, who is to advise and encourage him in his efforts for his own improvement.

Neither of these examinations is public. They are the regular government examinations, which must be passed by all candidates who seek to become masters in the elementary schools. In some special cases, however, patrons of schools, whether private or official, having to appoint to a vacant mastership, are authorized to institute a competitive examination of the candidates who offer themselves for the vacancy. Where the *commune* has the patronage of its school, it may institute a competitive examination before examiners appointed by itself for candidates already legally qualified, and nominated by the government. In Berlin this competitive examination takes place before a permanent Board.

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tice with reference to the appointment of the teachers for all the elementary schools of the country. For positions in the higher schools, candidates are obliged to undergo a searching scrutiny into their literary culture, moral character, and pedagogic power. And this is what is done, be it remembered, in a country which has long stood pre-eminent for its success in education of all grades, from the primary school to the university, — of the country of which Dr. Ryerson, a first-rate educational authority, says, after his recent educational tour in Europe, "In no other country is there so thorough and universal common-school education."

It will be observed that the Prussian system of examining and certificating teachers involves three essential features : first, a serious authoritative examination as a condition of entering upon the profession ; second, probation as an under-teacher with tests of the results ; and, third, competitive examination for a permanent appointment. By this system, incompetence is effectually excluded from the business of teaching, and the profession of teaching is at once rendered efficient and respectable. The candidate who fairly passes the prescribed ordeal in all its stages, is henceforth recognized as worthy of

confidence and respect in his profession. He has an assured status in the community, and his bread and reputation are not at the mercy every year of an incompetent or prejudiced local board of examiners.

In *Holland*, where the education of the people has been carried on for upwards of half a century with the most extraordinary success, where the teachers are held in high consideration and honor, and are placed in more comfortable circumstances than any other teachers in Europe, we find, as in Prussia, adequate provision for testing the qualifications of teachers. Here, the teacher, in order to enter his profession, has to obtain a *general admission*. To exercise it, he needs a *special admission*. The general admission is obtained by successfully passing the certificate examination. There are four grades of certificates: to be appointed either a public or a private school-master in the towns, it is necessary to hold a certificate of the first or second grade; the first grade can be attained by no one who is not twenty-five years old. The third grade qualifies a teacher to hold a village school. The fourth is reserved for under-masters and assistants. There is a regulation instructing the examiners to admit to the highest grade those

candidates only who give signs of a *distinguished culture*. This regulation has given to the school-master's training a humanizing and educating direction, which is missed where there is simply a large demand for masses of hard information.

The teacher has now his general admission. If he wishes to become a public teacher, he presents himself as a candidate for some vacant public mastership, and undergoes a competitive examination. If successful, the teacher then receives his special admission. As in Prussia, the certificate examination is serious, and it is conducted by duly qualified persons. The probation takes place, not after the examination, but before it, the candidates being required to serve three years as pupil-teachers, as a part of their professional education. Their success in this capacity is taken into account in awarding their certificates.

A similar system of examining teachers is in operation in *Switzerland*, where popular education is in an advanced state of development.

In *France* and *England*, but one examination is required; but that is thorough, and it is a real and sufficient guaranty of capacity, in respect of scholastic attainments.

But we need not go beyond the limits of our

own country to find a good system of examining teachers. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, the best models of public school systems in all respects, existing in America, were to be found in the New England States. But this is no longer the case. Such has been the progress made in some of the Middle and Western States, that some of them now offer models for the imitation of those States where the American system of free schools had its origin and earliest development; and in regard to the element under consideration, California is perhaps most worthy of imitation.

Probably in no other State of the Union are the legal provisions for the examination of teachers so comprehensive and complete, and in no other State have the laws relating to the qualifications of teachers been administered with so much vigor and success.

Three distinct boards for the examination of teachers have been created. First, there is the State Board of Examination, consisting of the superintendent of public instruction, who is *ex officio* chairman, and four professional teachers appointed by the superintendent. This Board must hold at least two sessions in each year, and it has power to grant certificates of the following grades: certificates of the first grade, valid for

four years ; certificates of the second grade, valid for two years ; and certificates of the third grade, valid for one year. And in order to elevate the profession of teaching, and advance the interests of public schools, this Board may grant teachers life diplomas, which shall remain valid during the life of the holder, unless revoked for immoral or unprofessional conduct, or want of qualifications to teach. But this most honorable diploma can be granted only to such persons as shall have, after having received the State diploma, taught successfully one year, or for the same period held the office of State, city, or county superintendent.

Next in order are the county Boards of Examination, composed of the county superintendent, who is *ex officio* chairman, and of teachers, not exceeding three, appointed by him. The Board must hold a session at least as often as once in three months, and also at and during any teachers' institute, held in the county.

The superintendent of public instruction is *ex officio* a member of all the county boards of examination. This Board has power to grant three grades of certificates valid in the county, the first for three years, the second for two years, and the third for one year.

Finally, there are city Boards of Examination. In every city having a Board of Education governed by special laws, there is a Board for determining the qualifications of teachers, which consists of the city superintendent, the president of the Board of Education, the county superintendent of the county in which the city is located, and three public school-teachers residents of the city, who are elected by the Board of Education for one year. This Board is empowered to grant certificates of the same grades and for the same time as the State Board, but valid only in the city in which they are granted. This Board is, however, not authorized to require an examination of a teacher who already holds a State diploma or certificate, unless such teacher is applicant for a school of a higher grade than the certificate already held allows such teacher to teach. Any city Board may recognize the certificate of any other city.

The State Board is also empowered to prescribe the standard of proficiency before a county Board, compliance with which shall entitle the holder of the certificate to a certificate from the State Board, upon due certification of the facts by the county superintendent.

Another wise provision in the school law of

California, calculated to elevate the profession of teaching, and give it an honorable status by the side of other learned professions, is in these words: "All regularly issued State Normal School diplomas from any State Normal School in the United States, and all Life Diplomas granted by the State Board of Examination in any of the United States, shall be recognized by the State Board of Examination of this State as *prima facie* evidence of fitness for the profession of teaching, and the said Board shall, on application of the holders thereof, proceed to issue, without examination, State certificates, the grade to be fixed at the option of the Board: *provided*, in all cases satisfactory evidence be given of good moral character and correct habits."

This system has not, like that of Prussia, been tested by long experience, but it has been in operation long enough to give proof of its excellence. It appears from the report of the superintendent that up to Jan. 1, 1867, there had been granted forty-six life diplomas, ninety-four State educational diplomas, one hundred and fifty-seven first grade certificates, one hundred and two of the second grade, and thirty-three of the third.

The effect of this law has been to create among the teachers of the State a strong *esprit du corps*,

a high sense of the dignity and importance of their profession, and a praiseworthy enterprise in fitting themselves for their work.

The State of Illinois may also be cited as having an excellent system of examining and certificating teachers. Provision is made for three grades of certificates: the State certificate, granted by the State superintendent, valid for life in every part of the State: a county certificate of the first grade, valid in the county for two years; and a county certificate of the second grade, valid in the county for one year, the last two being granted by county superintendents of schools. State certificates are never privately given, but only upon public examination, due notice having been given. The examinations are conducted by a Board of State examiners, appointed by the State superintendent, and none but distinguished and experienced practical teachers are chosen for this high duty. The county certificates are granted only on an examination conducted in a similar manner by the county superintendent or by a Board appointed by him.

The system of examinations for the civil service in Great Britain affords useful hints for the examination of candidates for the profession of teaching. This system provides for questions

on a very wide range of subjects, so that every candidate may have just credit for what he has learned. The aim is to secure the service of *educated* men, — men of broad culture, and not mere specialists. So the examination of teachers ought not to be limited to the branches to be taught. A man cannot teach the elementary branches well, unless his own education goes beyond that limit.

The conclusion to which I come, is, that the system of examining and certificating teachers in the New England States is radically defective, and that it ought to be reformed by providing for county and State Boards of Examiners, the former having authority to examine candidates for teachers, and to issue certificates of different grades, say, first, second, and third, to be valid within the county for different periods according to the grade; and the latter having authority to examine candidates and issue certificates of different grades to be valid throughout the State for different periods corresponding to the grades.

Such a provision could not fail to elevate the profession of teaching, and give it a professional character and dignity, and at the same time to afford a better guaranty to the community against incompetent teachers.

THE PROPER SCOPE AND PLAN OF COURSES OF STUDY
FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

BY M. G. DANIELL.

THE subject before us has, in one form or another, received a good deal of attention of late among teachers, both in and out of convention, and the discussion is not yet closed; nor indeed may we expect it to be closed for a long time to come. Absolute perfection in anything human is not to be expected, perhaps not even to be desired; for, perfection once attained, effort might cease, and the condition of this life is the reaching after perfection. By slow degrees, and after many trials and many failures, we may hope to approach nearer and nearer to, but never actually to reach, the perfect ideal.

I propose, in the short time that is given me for this paper, to address myself to the questions which I suppose to have been uppermost in the minds of those who proposed the topic for discussion, namely, the principal objects which teachers and school supervisors ought to have in view in laying out courses of study, the method of stating their requirements, and the proper limitations to be observed. I shall have time to

do but little more than simply to suggest some points to which attention may profitably be given in the discussion which is to follow, without attempting any extended argument upon any of them.

The first and most important object to be had in view in preparing a course of study, and indeed that which includes every other, and must never be lost sight of, seems to be nothing more nor less than to present a complete scheme of public school education. Well may any man who undertakes this office stand appalled at the magnitude of the task before him. For what does it involve? It involves, first of all, an intimate knowledge of the laws which regulate the development of the human mind. The realms of mental science must be explored, and the conflicting opinions of philosophers and metaphysicians carefully weighed. It involves a more or less intimate acquaintance with the vast and ever increasing domain of human knowledge, in order that those branches may be selected which, in view either of their practical utility or of their disciplinary value, are best suited for presentation to the youthful mind. It involves a practical and experimental knowledge of the daily and hourly routine of the school-room, and

of the average capacity and ability of teachers to carry out an ideal scheme of education. It involves the courage to withstand the force of long-standing prejudices, and the address to substitute in their place right views and opinions in the public mind. It should also involve an acquaintance with the literature of education in many languages. Who is sufficient for these things? Fortunately for the cause of true education, there are men among us who have set themselves resolutely to the task, men who are aware of the magnitude of the labor required, and of the interests involved. But it will require the combined thought and effort of all teachers to aid in the solution of this great and intricate problem.

Were it possible to start *de novo*, and develop a purely ideal scheme of education based upon *a priori* considerations alone, there is great reason to believe that it would meet with no better success, when put in practice, than other purely ideal schemes in legislation or other departments of action have met with, which leave out of view the results of experience; for the science of education is, after all, largely an experimental science, and before the merits of any plan can safely be passed upon, it must have been sub-

jected to the ordeal of strictly practical tests. As in the application of the formulas of pure mathematics to the mechanic arts, allowance has to be made for friction and the strength of materials, so we should find that corresponding allowances would have to be made in our educational scheme. And, although an enthusiastic reformer might wish it were possible to start with a *tabula rasa*, and lay his plans without reference to any existing state of affairs, still it is not altogether a misfortune that we are obliged to take things as they are, and devote our energies to the gradual modification of already existing systems, so far as a true philosophy, aided by lessons of long experience, shall seem to dictate.

Practically this is what is to be done, and this I conceive to be the hardest task of whoever has it in charge to lay out a course of study. It is a hard task *because* of the existence of a plan already in operation which a natural conservatism is inclined to think sufficient. It is often easier to tear down and build anew, than to repair and make additions to an edifice which is proved to be unsuited to fulfil the purpose for which it was designed.

There may be those, there certainly are many, who hold that no essential alteration is necessary

in the present school curriculum of studies ; that is, that the studies now pursued are the best that could be selected, and that the relative amount of time devoted to each should not be altered. A person holding these views would confine his attention, in laying out a programme, merely to the most practicable means of effectively grading the schools under his charge, by indicating how much of each branch should be required in each of the successive grades or classes in the several schools. This is an important part of the duty, but it is only a part, — one out of many objects to be kept in view. A man who takes no broader view of the field has no adequate idea of the extent of his duties and responsibilities.

I have promised myself not to enlarge, at the present time, upon the subject of changes in the branches to be taught, or in the time when each is to be introduced, or in the time to be devoted to each. It is an inviting field of discussion, where I would gladly tarry during the remainder of my twenty minutes, but I must pass on to other topics.

Among the minor objects of a course of study, which may properly be considered, are, first, the aiding of young and inexperienced teachers in beginning their work, in order that valuable time

may not be frittered away in useless experimenting; secondly, the affording of a standard of comparison between different schools in the community; and, thirdly, the economizing of time and labor, in graded schools particularly, on the part of both teachers and scholars. To a young and inexperienced teacher, entering the school-room for the first time, it is of incalculable advantage to have the work laid down with considerable minuteness. Many of us have only to go back in imagination to our first appearance at the head of a country district school, where all studies were "elective," and where there were to be nearly as many classes as scholars, to realize the advantage of having the work laid out beforehand by some one more competent than ourselves to perform the task. Many a teacher might thus be saved the disgrace of failing in the first attempt, and the wonder is that there are so comparatively few failures to record where so much depends on the labors of persons who, at the best, must be considered as ignorant and unskilled.

The usefulness of a complete programme of studies in affording a standard of comparison between different schools is undoubtedly great, but I am inclined to think it may be overrated,

and the means of comparison thus presented seriously abused. Except in a very general way, it seems to me unadvisable to carry any system to that degree of minuteness that you can tell exactly what line of what page of what book every scholar in town is studying at a given moment. It is well, essential even, to have a general plan of studies, to be followed by all the schools under the same supervision, but it must be remembered that some schools and some classes are capable of greater attainment than others ; in fact, that no two schools are exactly alike in the material of which they are composed ; and that, for this reason, any plan ought to be provided with a considerable amount of elasticity, to adapt it to the varying wants of schools which are differently composed and differently situated. A rigid adherence to the details of some plan might perhaps have some effect in stimulating the ambition, and directing the effort of a weak or inefficient teacher, but it might also have the contrary effect of levelling downward, or at least of cramping and hampering a teacher who felt that he might do more and perhaps better than he is required to do.

Here I must be allowed to touch, at some length, upon a subject which is intimately con-

nected with the subject under consideration, and that is, the method of transfer from one grade or class to another. This is a point which ought to be taken into serious consideration in laying out a programme. On what principle shall promotions be made from class to class, and from school to school? The difficulty is (and it is a serious difficulty at times) in establishing the standard of attainment requisite for promotion. The danger is, not so much, perhaps, in establishing too high a standard, as in establishing a false standard, and in adhering too rigidly to whatever standard is adopted, regardless of peculiar modifying circumstances in individual cases.

An important question arises here; namely, to what extent can the best results of education be shown in figures? I have never heard this question discussed, or even stated. It seems to have always been taken for granted that tables of percentage on test questions, mostly technical, tell the whole story of the teacher's ability and faithfulness, and of the intellectual status of the scholar. It may be heretical in me, but I do think there is great reason for doubting the universal application of this rule. I must, however, be content now with simply stating the question and my own doubts, hoping that I may have further light in the course of the discussion.

I have in mind now chiefly the relations of grammar schools to high schools, although the same principles hold good, and the same difficulties present themselves, though in a less degree, in the relations of the primary to the grammar school, and of the successive grades in each to each other. According to the theory of our system of public school education, the pupil enters the primary school, passes from there to the grammar school, through its several grades, and into the high school, from which he is graduated in due time; where his education at the public expense is completed. In practice it is found that but a very small proportion of public school scholars ever complete this course. One by one they drop out at almost every stage, and for various reasons. Many of these reasons are obvious, and need not claim our attention now, except such as appear to arise from faults inherent in the system itself, the removal of which would increase the number of pupils who complete the full course of public school instruction. That there are such faults existing in many places, I am well persuaded. I will try to indicate some of them.

The demand for showy results — results that can be displayed in public exhibitions, or in high

figures — must be met by teachers in some way or other. The consequence is that all mental dullness has a very poor show for advancement where this state of things obtains, and the unfortunate boy or girl whom nature has not gifted with the average abilities soon falls behind in the race, and drops out from sheer discouragement. Again, the application of an invariable standard for promotion from one grade to another ignores the obvious fact that there are in every school pupils whose capacity is such that no human effort can bring them up to that standard, supposing it to be put at a point that the average scholar can by diligent effort reach. The practical exclusion of such scholars from the high school, and perhaps from the upper classes of the grammar school, is in my judgment a serious evil and a blot upon the fair fame of our common school system. The walls that surround many of our high schools are very high. There is but one entrance, and that is very narrow. By skilful manipulation on the part of those whose business it is to prepare candidates for the ordeal, a majority of those who apply for admission are received through the narrow gate. But alas for the others! The high school is not for them. Not because they have been negligent of their duty in the grammar

school, but because nature has not endowed them with the capacity to reach a certain artificial standard of excellence. I appeal to every grammar-school master within the sound of my voice, and ask if there are not every year some one or two, or more, in their first classes who have completed the course as well as they are able, and would be glad to enter the high school, but who are prevented from applying, because they know that they cannot pass the ordeal of an examination, or because their teacher declines, under the direction of the committee, to give them the certificate, without which they cannot be allowed even to ask admission. I have put this question individually to a large number of grammar-school teachers, and, almost without exception, I have received the same answer, which is something as follows: "Yes, there is one in my class now, who cannot go to the high school; I cannot conscientiously give him a certificate of presumed literary qualifications, because I know he cannot pass the examination. It is too bad. He is a good, faithful scholar, who always does his best; but his memory is weak, and he lacks the power of application. He is the best writer and drawer in school, and a pretty fair reader; but these branches don't count in the examination, and it

is of no use for him to try." Such is the frequent testimony that you will receive, if you take the trouble to make the inquiry. Now I ask upon what theory of public education such scholars as I have indicated are shut out of the high school? Mind, I am not pleading for lazy or indolent boys and girls. I am willing to leave them wholly out of the account; although I may not be able to explain why, even in theory, indolence is to be confined to grammar schools. No, I am not offering a premium upon laziness. I plead for those who are virtually excluded from one grade of public schools, not through any fault of their own, but partly through their own misfortune, and partly through a fault in the system which so excludes them. I am not pleading for idiots. The cases are plain, and admit of no question, where pupils are out of place in the public school through mental imbecility.

When such a case as I have spoken of is brought to the attention of the powers that be, they will probably turn the matter off by saying that so-and-so had better stay in the grammar school another year. "Of course," say they, "if he cannot pass our examination, it would be unfair in us to admit him; and, besides, where could we draw the line, if we begin to admit

scholars to the high school by any other than the regular way? There is the entrance. If they can enter, well and good. And if you happen to be the boy's teacher whose case you are pleading, you may esteem yourself fortunate if the powers that be do not send you off with the imputation that you are making a desperate effort to palm off upon them a sample of your bad workmanship.

I am not now finding fault with high school examinations, as they affect the majority of pupils. That subject has been ably treated elsewhere. And however much a "strained and pedantic" standard may operate to the detriment of true scholarship, and to depriving, by its very character, many scholars of their right to a complete public school education, still I hold that, whatever standard is set, if it be intended to apply to the average ability of candidates, there will be in almost every school, almost every year, a few exceptional cases, that should be treated as exceptional cases, and decided by other considerations, as well as by their proficiency in arithmetic, history, geography, grammar, and spelling. It may appear that the want of ability to analyze and parse "Paradise Lost" may not imply a lack of ability to study natural philosophy successfully. A poor speller may

turn out an excellent botanist. Again, in places where private schools are numerous and easy of access, and the question of ability to meet the expense of a private school may be ignored by large numbers of parents, a great deal of valuable material is lost to the high school by an illiberal or exclusive policy. The authorities do not want, of course, to cringe before wealth and position. They need not and ought not to do this. But, after all, it is a good thing to have the wealthy and influential members of society personally interested in our public schools, by having their children educated there. I have in mind, at this moment, an instance in point. A young lady of fair ability, but of a nervous and excitable temperament, had nearly completed her grammar-school studies creditably, and it was her father's wish that she should attend the town high school. But, as the time drew near for the examination, she was seized with a perfect fever of excitement and agitation, and finally prevailed upon her father to change his purpose, and send her to a private school. She had not the confidence which comes from the possession of brilliant talents, nor the stolidity which comes from sheer indifference. The very apprehension or failure took away from her almost all power

of successful labor, and if she had made the attempt, the probabilities are that she would have failed. Such cases are not rare. Perhaps there is no remedy for them. But if the grammar-school master could feel free to go to the committee, without any fear of an unjust imputation upon his motives, and state the peculiar circumstances which affect these exceptional cases; and if the committee would listen to his statements fairly, and consider that he is really the person of all others who is best able to judge of the qualifications of his own scholars, — the sensitive girl and the dull boy, who had done their duty faithfully, might be encouraged; and assured that their cases would be fairly and generously considered, — they would pass their examination the better, and very likely need no favors. There may be many committees who act in just this way. Some do not so act.

One word more. If school committees would adopt some other standard of comparison between the different teachers under their oversight than the results of the high school examination, the interests of the community would be better served, and the high school would not necessarily suffer. Practically in many places all that the grammar-school master's certificate

amounts to, is to admit the pupil to the examination, and no more. Now, I submit that really the grammar-school master is the only person capable of judging fairly of a pupil's qualifications for the high schools, supposing him to be informed of the requirements for admission, and of the course of study which succeeds, because he is acquainted with all the circumstances of each case. The committee or the high school teacher, in a two days' examination, learn almost nothing in comparison with what the grammar-school master already knows. And yet, lest he suffer under invidious comparison with other teachers, whose circumstances may be altogether different from his, and, knowing that per cent is the only thing to be taken into account, he must not only teach with a single eye to per cent, and cramming is the very way to do that, but he must give his certificate with sole reference to the pupil's ability to get per cent (that is, to stand, and hold cramming). If it has been found in actual experience that such a course as I recommend has wrought ill to the schools, or, in other words, that teachers have abused the trust reposed in them, or shown themselves unfitted to judge of a pupil's qualifications, the remedy is simple.

I hope I have not said too much upon this subject, or that I seem to be fighting a man of straw ; I have said thus much in the belief that an evil exists, and that it comes within the proper scope and plan of courses of study to remedy the evil. I will state here that I am not a grammar-school teacher, and do not speak from any personal considerations.

After the course is laid out in its general features, it is to be determined next how it should be presented to teachers, and the degree of minuteness with which the details should be specified. At first thought it would seem that anything more than a general outline would rather hinder than help teachers, by depriving them of freedom in the application of the general principles ; and certainly here is an evil to be avoided. The amount of detail will depend, I suppose, in great measure upon the kind of school to be provided for. In ungraded or partially graded schools, where the same teacher carries the pupil through several, classes it is less necessary to specify exactly how much progress should be made in each step of the course. The finished product is what is required, the details of the process by which it is produced being left to the judgment of the teacher ; but in graded schools, and particularly

where there is a large number of such schools under the same supervision, the necessity is more evident of laying out the course with reference to each of the several steps into which the course is divided. Possibly this subdivision might advantageously be left to the heads of the several schools. The necessity of considerable minuteness in the requirements is the greater, in my judgment, on account of certain false notions which prevail on the subject of thoroughness. The exhortations to thoroughness are so numerous and so emphatic, that many teachers are misled by them. What is it to be thorough in any branch of learning? Some persons would be satisfied that a pupil is thorough in the history of the United States, for example, who had committed to memory the words of some text-book. By the way, how would you teach the history of the United States thoroughly? You have a certain epitome of that history in the form of a text-book. Will you have the pupil learn all that that contains, and nothing more? Or will you have him learn a part of his text-book, and something besides? Or will you give less attention to what he actually learns than to the habit of mind which he acquires for historical study in general? Again in arithmetic, what is it to be thorough in simple

addition? Is it to understand why you set down the units and carry the tens? Or is it to be able to enter a counting-room, and cast up accurately the columns of a ponderous ledger? In short, it is plain that for the sake of uniformity, if not for the sake of guiding the ignorant, a course of study ought to specify in detail the expectations of the committee in regard to each teacher's work, care being taken all the while not to hamper teachers with unnecessary requirements. As to the methods of instruction, these, I think, ought to be left mainly with the teacher.

Another question of some importance is, whether a course of study should set the standard of acquirement at the maximum or minimum point. Still another is whether the work should be designated by topics, or by pages, in the textbook. I can only suggest these questions, without attempting to answer them.

I have thus endeavored to show, as well as I am able, what appears to me to be the general scope and plan of courses of study for public schools. I do not claim that I have exhausted the subject, even in its general bearings; and of special points, I have treated none of any considerable length except the relation of grammar schools to high schools. I trust, however, that

my efforts to awaken discussion upon some of the topics suggested will not have been in vain; and that, I imagine, is the main object of an opening paper.

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